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THE
NORTH-WEST PASSAGE,
AND THE
PLANS FOR THE SEARCH
FOR
SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

A Review :

BY JOHN BROWN, F.R.G.S.,
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"A mighty maze ! but not without a plan."—POPE.

"Here, on a single plank thrown safe ashore,
I hear the tumult of the distant throng."—YOUNG.

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TO THE PRESIDENT,

SIR RODERICK IMPEY MURCHISON,

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THE COUNCIL AND THE FELLOWS

OF THE

ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

THIS VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE renewal of the sad subject to which the following pages are devoted, may to some appear ungracious, and therefore unnecessary ; but while the lives of one hundred and thirty-five gallant Englishmen sent on a perilous service *remain unaccounted for, while the area to which they were specially directed is yet unsearched*, the British nation's character for honour and humanity suffers. The fate of Sir Hugh Willoughby and his companions became known to us, because the scene of the melancholy catastrophe was within the range of his fellow-man's haunts and wanderings ; but, unhappily, it is not so with Sir John Franklin and his associates—they are beyond communication with the civilized world. Cut off from it, they can never be recovered, or the question of their existence set at rest, *unless sought* ; happily, the area within which efforts may be concentrated is circumscribed, but renewed search is imperative. To keep alive the recollection of the hapless, forlorn position of our missing countrymen is the primary object of this volume. With failure, notwithstanding the persevering efforts of our daring sailors, in the past ; we cannot think this appeal to the British nation, so renowned for its generous humanity, will be made in vain.

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ARCTIC EXPEDITIONS

AND THEIR RESULTS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Arctic Circle is again left to its own gloom, silence, and dreary solitude. Of the well-equipped squadrons sent to the Arctic regions in search of Sir John Franklin and his gallant officers and crews, part have been abandoned, and the remainder have returned to England. Not a vestige or trace of the *Erebus* or *Terror* has rewarded the untiring perseverance of the searchers. We know nothing of the Expedition since its departure from Beechey Island in 1846; the course it took, its movements, its fortunes, its position, or its fate, are wrapped in distressing, and seemingly impenetrable, mystery. The important fragments found in Parker Bay (1851), and brought home by the indefatigable Dr. Rae, notwithstanding their maritime origin and the British Government mark (affording evidence of identity), offer no decided clue to the whereabouts of the missing expedition, neither do those obtained from the natives of Cambridge Bay (1852), nor the other articles picked up at the largest Finlayson Island (1853) by Captain Collinson, of H.M.S. *Enterprise*, all equally of naval source, and bearing the same indubitable stamp. Even (and above all in interest) the still more positive and precious relics, including an Order, and various articles in silver plate, &c., known as having belonged to Sir John Franklin and other officers of this ill-fated expedition,—even these, with the calamitous report connected with them, obtained from the Esquimaux of Pelly Bay (1854), due also to the exertions of Dr. Rae;—these all, sad memorials as they are, while they indicate significantly a probable locality for this anxiously and steadfastly sought for expedition; while they reveal the too certain fact of a portion of the gallant officers and men of that expedition having perished under the most miserable circumstances, still they do not

entirely solve the mystery; they tell us the sad tale of the whereabouts and fate of a part, but the welfare generally of the expedition, its weal or woe, its safety or its doom, remain as inexplicably dark as ever. But of these important reliquæ, more anon; they involve inquiries too serious to be lightly passed over; silent but significant is the tale they tell, involving important inferences, especially the earlier relics of Rae and Collinson, 1851-2 and 3, as to the direction in which we must look, if we would learn more of the position of the Expedition or its remains. We fear they have not obtained sufficient attention.

Thus are we unhappily placed after six years of rigid search, conducted, with rare exceptions, with an order, energy, and perseverance above all praise: still every exertion has failed to penetrate the gloomy mystery hanging over the fate of the lamented Franklin and his gallant companions; in vain have we tried to lift the awful veil: hidden from our eyes, he and they have become, and all that concerns them, their joys or their sorrows, as it were, a sealed book to us. Still memory lingers fondly over them, recalls them in the past under a thousand forms, in scenes, happy scenes in years gone by, sees and follows them in the desolate region where science and honour had called them, and pauses, lingering, hoping that hope might arise, unwilling to forsake, and incredulous to believe that all are gone. She yet vivifies the dreary solitude with the animation of our ill-starred countrymen; she mourns a part as already lost, whose sufferings are with the past; but she forbids the hasty assumption that all have perished;—the inured manly form, the hardy youth in his beauty, these she conceives may yet live, harboured by the wild Esquimaux, or, self-sustained, are acclimatized and supported by a more energetic, persevering skill, and a superior management. Thought, ever restless, would penetrate the future; she wails their long absence, and weighs the probabilities of support, of life, and of return. To her, a small but bright ray yet exists, and hope is sustained by it; for she doubts the power of the fell destroyer over the will of the strong man in his prime, the self-reliant, him to whom the life of the land and the sea are alike tributary. Thought, too, impatient of failure, scans the means adopted, and the causes that have led to such barren results; she questions and doubts the judgment which has terminated in such lamentable want of success. "Turn, busy thought, turn from them:" but "thought repelled, resenting rallies," reasons, and questions,—All *your* efforts have failed to trace the absent ones, those so dear to our hearts: you directed their footsteps, have you followed after them? Has all been done that can be done to restore

the gallant Franklin and his devoted companions to their country and their home?

Having given the question of a North-West Passage, and the Arctic inquiries arising out of it, much and long consideration (since 1817), unbiassed by routine, and free to think, we are compelled to confess, however disinclined to differ from Arctic authorities, that while we admit the sincere desire on the part of those who planned the searching expeditions to advise and to act rightly, and cheerfully acknowledge the great zeal and merit of all the officers and crews of the searching squadrons, whether public or private,—for, with exceptions, they have nobly done their duty,—still we cannot bring our minds to think that all has been done that can be done, nor much less can we join with those who think we have sought the *Erebus* and *Terror* in the right direction: we do think, and have ever thought, that from the period (1850) when we rejected the search by the southern side of Barrow's Straits for the northern (in other words, departed from the tenor of the instructions given to Franklin on his departure in 1845), from that time we have been in pursuit of a myth. Plainly to speak, we think that all search by the North, whether by the Wellington Channel, or Jones' or Smith's Sounds, has been so much precious time lost, so much suffering unnecessarily inflicted, and the valuable qualities for daring, endurance, &c., of our heroic officers and men unwisely trifled with. But unhappily this is not the only source for deep regret; who can say what this sad hallucination may not have led to? One dares not contemplate the dreadful results of disappointment, suffering, and sorrow, on board the doomed *Erebus* and *Terror*!

CHAPTER I.

A GLANCE AT THE ORIGIN OF THE QUESTION OF A NORTH-WEST PASSAGE.

THE "OLD WORTHIES" BY SEA AND BY LAND, TO 1631.

It is scarcely necessary to recapitulate in our day, when Arctic enterprise has been so much discussed, all the circumstances that gave rise to the long (more than three centuries and a half) much agitated question of a North-West Passage. The marvellous and brilliant discoveries made by Christopher Columbus in the West, and by Diaz and De Gama in the East, without doubt set men's minds pondering on acquisitions still to be gained, and on profitable speculations yet to be hoped for. Columbus more particularly excited astonishment. Of him "there was great talke in all the Court of Henry VII.," "insomuch that all men with great admiration affirmed it to be a thing more divine than humane to sail by the West unto the East, where spices growe, by a way that was never knownen before."* The Cabotas were already here (Henry VII., 1496); men of great reputation. "John Cabot, the father, who was very skilful in navigation and cosmography," conjectured, from the success of Columbus, "that there might probably be lands to be found out to the North-West."† These opinions at once obtained credit with the king and with the merchants. "The era was propitious to the quick advancement of knowledge. The recent invention of the art of printing enabled men to communicate rapidly and extensively their ideas and discoveries." "Every step in advance was immediately and simultaneously and widely promulgated, recorded in a thousand forms, and fixed for ever. There could never again be a dark age. Nations might shut their eyes to the light, and sit in wilful darkness, but they could not trample it out; it would still shine on, dispensed to happier parts of the world."‡ John and Sebastian taught "by

* Hakluyt, part iii., p. 6; Lediard's "Naval History," vol. i., p. 87; Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1849 (by Randall), p. 4.

† Lediard's "Naval History," vol. i., p. 84.

‡ Washington Irving's "Life and Voyages of Columbus" (Bohn), p. 29.

reason of the sphere," "by way of the North-West," "a shorter track" "into India," and men "became excited," "by this Fame and Report," "to attempt some notable thing."* The Cabotas saw the material for maritime enterprise was there, but dormant, because the object on which to fix itself was wanting; they saw daring, endurance, and perseverance around them, the elements (good raw material) required; and the Cabotas, by their skill in cosmography and seamanship, soon furnished the object, and with it threw in their feeling, zeal, and adventurous enthusiasm. No wonder, then, that an ardent desire should be kindled for the "Passage," which desire has continued in all its fulness to the present day. It may at times have been arrested, from causes arising out of various circumstances; it may have been misdirected; but though intermitted in its action, the desire has been persistent, and has endured, and will endure, until discovery has no more "unknownen" regions to bestow—until science has filled all the blanks in her round of inquiry—and until the question of the "Passage" is absorbed in perfect knowledge. The love for enterprise is inherent in Englishmen; it may be interrupted, but, because innate, it cannot be eradicated.

The fruits soon followed; for to John Cabot is due "that the American continent was first discovered, by an expedition commissioned to "set up" the "banner of England."† To these men, then, may be attributed the glory of having raised the spirit of maritime discovery; the first instalment of which was the "Londe and Isles"‡ of continental North America. "For, though Columbus had found certain isles, it was 1498 before he saw the continent, which was a year after Cabot; so that, in reality, the honour of this great discovery is as much, or more, due to the English nation than to the Spanish. Americus, from whom this whole continent has taken its name, only swept away the gleanings (if I may be allowed the expression) of these two great discoverers; but Sebastian Cabot went further than all of them, for he sailed to about 40° southward of the line, and to 67° towards the North."§

We have dwelt with a lingering fondness on the memory and merits of the Cabotas, for they invoked the latent spirit of our beloved country: by them, the example they gave, and the knowledge

* Lediard's "Naval History," vol. i., p. 87.

† "Memoir of Cabot" (Biddle), the original patent, pp. 76 and 77.

‡ "Memoir of Cabot" (*ibid.*), p. 76.

§ See Lediard's "Naval History," vol. i., p. 88; the testimony of John Smith "author" of the "General History of Virginia."

they bequeathed to us, has resulted the exalted position we hold; by it Britain attained the high position in which it stands, the pride and yet the envy of the nations. They "gave a continent to England; yet no one can point to the few feet of earth she has allowed them in return."* Alas! their deeds or their memories have had scarcely their meed of praise, scarcely justice. Thus from the Cabotas originated in England the first idea of a North-West Passage, and they were the first to show the way and practically to attempt to solve it. It seems that Henry VII. countenanced it, but it is doubtful if he did more; the first charter granted to the Cabotas says, "upon their own proper costs and charges;"† but whether he aided in the fitting out of the first expedition or not is uncertain. Be this as it may, the merchants were not slow to act on the suggestions of the Cabotas—"men of great wisdom and gravity;" they saw at once the great advantages that would accrue to themselves if, by any probability, the passage could be made. "Diuers marchants of London ventured in her (John Cabota's ship) small stockes," "and in the company of the said ship, sailed, also out of Bristow, three or foure small ships fraught with sleight and grosse merchandizes, &c., &c."‡ No doubt these "marchants" had already experienced the annoyances and procrastination—may be, had been subjected to the impositions, the robberies, and the losses, arising from and besetting both the long and then only known routes to China, India, and the Spice Islands. They knew of the perils of the stormy cape (of Good Hope), and the hazardous nature of all transport by the Levant, both alike injurious to their interests. Can we greatly wonder, then, that they should turn their minds to a shorter route and brighter prospects, and give their best energies to the North? by which the Indies and Cathaio might be quicker reached, either by the "Londe and Isles" "of late found by the said John Kabatto" (Cabot) that is, by the West unto the East, "where spices growe, by a way that was never knowen before,"§ that is, by a North-West passage. Or, if by an easterly course along the northern coasts of Europe, attain the same object by a North-East passage.

It has been charged to the old "marchants" that they were in-

* "Memoir of Cabot" (Biddle), p. 223.

† Lediard's "Naval History," vol. i., p. 85, quoting Hakluyt, part iii., p. 4.

‡ See "Robert Fabian's Chronicle," Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1850 (Rundall), p. 23; and "Memoir of Cabot" (Biddle), p. 43; and Lediard's "Naval History," vol. i., p. 88.

§ Hakluyt, part iii., p. 6; Lediard's "Naval History," vol. i., p. 87.

fluenced solely by their covetousness, and were not wont to regard "vertue without sure, certaine, and present gaines;" and even the estimable Hakluyt, in his "Epistle Dedicatorie," seems led away by a similar feeling: "Certes, if hetherto in our own discoveries we had not beene led with a preposterous desire of seeking rather gaine than God's glorie, I assure myself that our labours had taken farre better effecte."* This charge, to say the least of it, is not over just towards the "old worthies;" for do we not find the kings of "Spaine" and "Portugale" (in opposite directions) solely influenced by the desire to obtain the "wealth of Mangi, Cathay, and other provinces belonging to the Grand Khan"? &c., "so that by" "the orient and occident they have compassed the worlde." But they mixed up a seeming religion with it, "pretending, in glorious words, that they made their discoveries chiefly to convert infidelles to our most holy faith (as they say)," but "in deed and truth sought not them but their goods and riches," so says the worthy Hakluyt. Again, with us, was it not the setting forth by John Cabot to Henry VII. "that he made no doubt he could" "find out islands or countries abounding with rich commodities, as Columbus had lately done," that induced that monarch to lend "a willing ear" to his proposal?

The facts are—the North-West question was brought so prominently, so vividly before the attention of all, from the highest to the lowest, the "ilands and lands" were so invested with the romance of wealth, in all its fascinating forms, all that was rich and rare, gems and "spicerie," in every thought and form, to allure to realms unknown, that kings, nobles, lawyers, merchants, each and all, were excited in the last degree, and each and all entered on the great question of a Passage, trusting and hoping to share in the sure, solid results that were to follow. To impute, then, to the merchants alone the charge of covetousness is manifestly unjust. It is not too much to say, if the "marchants," with the Cabotas at their head, had not equipped this first expedition, it never would have sailed, and England would have lost the glory of the first discovery of the American continent.

That the spirit of traffic and commercial speculation entered largely into the views of the first promoters of this great geographical inquiry, there is not a doubt. "Gold, Rubies, Diamonds, Bolasses, Granates, iacincts, and other stones and pearles,"† had then, as now, a potent influence. But let no man sneer at this as an unworthy

* Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1850, "Divers Voyages, &c., by J. Winter Jones," pp. 13 and 14.

† *Ibid.*

motive; the first impulse to great acts, does not always take a pure form, it often arises under a questionable phase. How often is it marked by the love of power, yclept freedom, honour, and glory, or under an imagined sense of wrong! How often has it set mankind together by the ears, warring against each other, to the cruel injury of the mass and the benefit of the few! How much more to be prized the arts of peace—commerce excited and aided by science, than all the wild uproar, misery, and ruin concomitant with war! "Forasmuch as the great and almighty God hath given unto mankind, above all other living creatures, such a heart and desire that every man covets to join friendship with others, to love and to be loved, also to give and receive mutual benefits,—It is, therefore, the duty of all men, according to their power, to maintain and encrease this desire in every man, with well deserving to all men"—"As well to seek such things as we lack, as also to carry unto them, from our regions, such things as they lack, so that hereby not only commodity may ensue both to them and Us, but also an indissoluble and permanent league of friendship be established between Us both,"* &c. Man is not changed; the love of filthy lucre is equally strong; but at the present time it is a question if it is continued with the same elevated spirit of honesty and fair dealing as in those of old. Again, embarking their "ventures," as they did in such ships, seeking to find out "unknown lands," what hope had they of "certaine and present gaines?" Such a thought is simply ridiculous. No; a higher purpose ruled them, and that was the thought "that there is a straight and short way open unto the West—even vnto Cathay."†

The merchant adventurers suffered great losses; their "marquisset of golde" had turned out valueless. This gives occasion to the worthy Hakluyt for the remark, "I trust that nowe, being taught by their manifold losses, our men will take a more Godly course." This is rather severe from that good old man, after pointing them to a "lande where cinamon and cloues are growing," and telling them, "the time approacheth, and nowe is, that we of England may share and part stakes (if we will our selves) both with the Spaniarde and the Portingale, in part of America and other regions as yet undiscovered, and surely if there were in vs that desire to aduance the honour of our countrie which ought to be in every good man, wee woulde not all this while have foreslowne the possessing of those

* See "Letters Missive from King Edward VI.," Hakluyt, part i., p. 231; Lediard's "Naval History," vol. i., p. 117, &c.

† See Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1850, "Divers Voyages by J. Winter Jones," p. 13.

landes, whiche of equitie and right appertaine vnto vs."* Admitting the love of gain, still it was tempered with self denial, and with a chivalry for daring enterprise; and both were subjected to the science of the day, which last was encouraged, and allowed, on the whole, full play. The love of traffic is no way dishonourable in itself; it is only when pursued inordinately that it becomes base and unworthy. But in our case this was scarcely likely, where the influencing motives are, "yf the yssue proue good, they are like to be ptakers of that good; and yf itt should succede otherwise, yet the deed is charitable;"† wealth connecting herself with the dangers and uncertainties of discovery with such principles cannot be presumed selfish, or to look for "sure, certaine, and present gaines." The results tell of "manifolde losses" to the merchants; but science was enriched, and the nation was benefited, and the name of England was in the end made glorious, "farre more then can be done by any of all these great troubles and warres, which dayly are vsed in Europe among the miserable christian people."‡

Let it not be forgotten, that these time-honoured "old worthies," these rich "merchaunts," did it. Their names will last while "England is true to herself." Thickly are they strewed around the "londe and isles" their enterprising spirit had given to their country, giving an interest to and adorning many an otherwise solitary, desolate spot. Kings, queens, princes, royal maids and matrons, our Henries, Elizabeth, Charles, Ann, &c., are loyally remembered; as are dutifully many noble patrons—Nottingham, Salisbury, Exeter, Southampton, &c., their true names lost in their titles. But who can notice the proper names without a deep interest in what they said and what they did?—Dudley Digges, Lancaster, Jones, Smith, Roe, Button, and that "never failing friend of the voyage," Wolstenholme, Master Lok, &c. Who can read the quaint titles given to places, as "Brook Cobham," "Briggs' Mathematics," "Cary's Swans' Nest," "Hubert's Hope," "Hopes Checked," and "Hope Advanced," without entering into their hopes and fears, esteeming and wishful to know more of them; how they "lived, and moved, and had their being;" how their generals and captains fared; of the hapless Hudson, of John Davis, of Baffin, of N. W. Foxe, and a host of

* "Epistle Dedicatorie," Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1850, "Divers Voyages by J. Winter Jones," pp. 8, 11, and 14.

† See "Voyages towards the North West by Thomas Rundall," Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1842, p. 151.

‡ "Divers Voyages by J. Winter Jones," Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1850, p. 25.

others, often in tribulation, and yet always acknowledging "God's Mercy." Many of these respected names have, and others are fast disappearing from our charts,—a fact greatly to be regretted, for they told of the deeds of the enterprising merchants of Old England. Where does Lok's Land appear now?

Let not slander, then, condemn the "Old Worthies:" they seem to have thrown their "ventures" in rather as a point of their faith in the matter, for the encouragement of geographical discovery and the glory of their country, than from any great hope of gain they might realize to themselves. "In a fleete of three shippes and a carauell, that went from this citie, armed by the marchauntes of which departed in April last past, I and my partener haue 1400 ducates, that we employed in the sayde fleete, principally for that two Englishmen, friends of mine, which are some what learned in cosmographie, should go in the same shippes to bring mee certaine relation of the situation of the countrey, and to be experte in the nauigation of those seas, and there to haue informations of many other things and aduise that I desire to know especially," &c.* They and their officers seem to have acted in many cases with singular disinterestedness, and freedom from narrow-minded covetousness, a conduct we should do well in our time to imitate, marked as it is by a selfishness too obtrusively all-pervading not to be observed. How rare are the examples of one "attemptinge of the Discou'ry of ye Northwest Passage," and, by his own act, "disable himselfe from all demands for his Sallary and paines taking if he discou' not"?† This observation is not intended to apply to the Arctics and Antarcotics of the nineteenth century; we would have persevering effort always rewarded, whether the object sought is achieved or not. We only give the above quotation to show that the "Old Worthies" were not so penurious and selfish, were not influenced solely by the love of gain. But little did these "Old Worthies," in their desire to reap the riches of Cathaya,—little did they imagine the perplexing legacy they were bequeathing to their posterity; the care, the suffering, and the toil to be undergone; the steadfast, the prolonged effort and daring required, and this too amid obstacles the most harassing, monotonous, and appalling, in regions where man, in all his might, presents in himself the humiliating spectacle of utter weakness. Little did

* See Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1850, "Divers Voyages, &c., by J. W. Jones," p. 35.

† See Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1849, "Voyages towards the North West by Thomas Rundall," p. 64.

those "men of great wisdom and gravity," even "the good old gentleman, Master Cabota" himself, when "he and his friends banketted at the signe of the Christopher," at "Grauesende," conceive the sacrifices to be made over centuries, and the devotedness demanded from all those who should come after them, before they, in their struggles to settle this "Great Question," should successfully tread the broad lands of the flowery Cathay, or gather the overflowing riches of the farther Ind.

It would lead us far beyond the limits we have assigned to ourselves were we to chronicle all the reasons urged and the attempts made to "finde out that shorte and easie passage by the North-West, which we *haue hetherto* so long desired."* Under the auspices of the "Old Worthies" really,—though ostensibly countenanced by kings, queens, and nobles,—uprose a race of men, daring and enthusiastic, whose names would add honour to any country, and embalm its history.

Commencing with the reign of Henry VII., we have first, John Cabot (1497), ever renowned; for he it was who first saw and claimed for the "Banner of England" the American continent. Sebastian, his son, follows (1498)—a name the faint-heartedness of Sir Thomas Pert (Henry VIII., 1517), and failure in the enterprise, could not tarnish—honourable as wise. Nor may we omit Master Robert Thorne, of Bristol (1527); Master Hore (1536); and Master Michael Lok (1545), of London—men who knew "cosmographie" and the "weighty and substantial reasons" for "a discovery even to the North Pole." For a short time Arctic energy changed its direction from the North-West to the North-East,† but wanting success in that quarter, again it reverted to the North-West, then we find Martin Frobisher (1576 to 78), George Best (1577), Sir Humphrey Gilbert (1583), James Davis (1585 to 87), George Waymouth (1602), John Knight (1606), the cruelly-treated Henry Hudson (1607 to 10), James Hall (1611), Sir Thomas Button (1612), Fotherbye (1614), Baffin and Bylot (1615-16), N. W. (Luke) Fox (1631), Thomas James (1631), &c., &c. Thus

* "Epistle Dedicatorie," p. 11, Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1850, "Divers Voyages by J. Winter Jones."

† But of this change came "the discoverie of Muscovia," &c. Associated with the North-East is the hapless Sir Hugh Willoughby (1553), Chancellor (1553-5), Burroughs (1556), Pet (1580), Jackman (1580), Bennet (1603), Wood (1676)—names of Englishmen. Other nations were not idle—the Dutch Barentz (1594 & 8), Nay (1594), Reijp (1596), &c. Danish—Munk (1619), &c. French—Verazzano (1524), the gallant Cartier (1584-5), Roberval (1549), &c. Portuguese—the unfortunate Cortereals (1500-2), &c.

in the course of sixty years—now breaking the icy fetters of the North, now chained by them; now big with high hope "of the Passage," then beaten back by the terrific obstacles, as it were guarding it—withstanding, these men never faltered, never despaired of finally accomplishing it. Their names are worthy to be held in remembrance; for with all their faults, all their strange fancies and prejudices, still they were a daring and a glorious race, calm amid the most appalling dangers: what they did was done correctly, as far as their limited means went; each added a something that gave us more extended views and a better acquaintance with the globe we inhabit—giving especially large contributions to geography, with a more fixed resolution to discover the "Passage." By them the whole of the eastern face of North America was made known, and its disjointed lands in the North, even unto 77° or 78° N.

It seems their labours were not suffered to be lost—the results were noted down, and taken advantage of; for we find the cold and tempestuous "New-found-land," and even Spitzbergen, commonly visited within a few years after. One can easily conceive, that lands nearer to the sun should be visited by numbers—their genial influences, no doubt, offered greater attraction; that the man of wisdom and the sage inquirer should soon be followed by the reckless lover of adventure, and the mercenary and the sordid, and even that the British merchant, too, should go—his mission would give consistency, honour, and order; but that the frozen, desolate North should have at such an early period so many adventurers, surprises. It could only be the "Passage" that was to lead to the long and coveted "Land of y^e Chinas, and from thence to the Land of Cathaio oriental,"* that attracted them. Every mile in a north-west direction cleared the way for further attempts—adding to the knowledge of those who were to come after, the dear-bought experience of the past. Still, all their efforts were unsuccessful, though in the main in the right direction. Ye marine worthies! how many anxious days and painfully sleepless nights, from storm and doubt of position, must have been yours! what suffering from cold and from scanty fare! what discomfort from your small, fragile, pent-up vessels! All this you patiently endured, so that "by God's grace" "you might possesse and keepe that Passage." Still, though unsuccessful, by their undaunted efforts the Great Question became more known and of deeper interest; every new discovery contributed to dispel the darkness hanging over the dreary mystical

* "Declaration of the Indies," &c., by Master Robert Thorne, p. 31, Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1850, by J. Winter Jones.

regions of the North. The generals, admirals, and captains, gained great honour and fame; but the merchants, as we have shown, only incurred great losses—they were denied even the poor merit of having consideration for the Passage.

We cannot part with these old worthies of the sea (we have endeavoured to do justice to those of the land) without giving expression to the sentiments of those no mean judges who came after them, and under far more comfortable and heart-cheering circumstances. "They appear to have encountered dangers," says Capt. Phipps,* "which at that period must have been particularly alarming from their novelty, with the greatest fortitude and perseverance; as well as to have shown a degree of diligence and skill, not only in the ordinary and practical, but more scientific parts of their profession, which might have done honour to modern seamen, with all their advantages of later improvements." The late distinguished Sir Edward Parry adds his testimony;† and coming from such an authority it cannot fail to be interesting, although somewhat lengthy: the sentiments he expresses are marked by such sincerity of feeling that we think it our duty to extract the whole:—

"In revisiting many of the spots discovered by our early British navigators in the Polar regions, and in traversing the same tracks which they originally pursued, I have now and then, in the course of my narratives, had occasion to speak of the faithfulness of their accounts, and the accuracy of their hydrographical information. I should, however, be doing but imperfect justice to the memory of these extraordinary men, as well as to my own sense of their merits, if I permitted the present opportunity to pass without offering a still more explicit and decided testimony to the value of their labours. The accounts of Hudson, Baffin, and Davis, are the productions of men of no common stamp. They evidently relate things just as they saw them, dwelling on such nautical and hydrographical notices as, even at this day, are valuable to any seaman going over the same ground; and describing every appearance of nature, whether on the land, the sea, or the ice, with a degree of faithfulness which can alone, perhaps, be duly appreciated by those who succeed them in the same regions, and under similar circumstances. . . . It is, indeed, impossible for any one, personally acquainted with the phenomena of the Icy Seas, to peruse the plain and unpretending narratives of these

* See the Introduction to Phipps' "Voyage towards the North Pole," 1773, p. 9.

† "Journal of the Third Voyage for the Discovery of a North-West Passage in 1824 and 25," pp. 181-83.

navigators, without recognizing, in almost every event they relate, some circumstance familiar to his own recollection and experience, and meeting with numberless remarks which bear most unequivocally about them the impress of truth.

"While thus doing justice to the faithfulness and accuracy with which they recorded their discoveries, one cannot less admire the intrepidity, perseverance, and skill, with which, inadequately furnished as they were, those discoveries were effected, and every difficulty and danger braved.

"That any man, in a single frail vessel of five-and-twenty tons, ill-found in most respects, and wholly unprovided for wintering, having to contend with a thousand real difficulties, as well as with numberless imaginary ones, which the superstitions then existing among sailors would not fail to conjure up,—that any man under such circumstances should, two hundred years ago, have persevered in accomplishing what our old navigators did accomplish, is, I confess, sufficient to create in my mind a feeling of the highest pride on the one hand, and almost approaching to humiliation on the other: of pride, in remembering that it was *OUR* countrymen who performed these exploits; of humiliation, when I consider how little, with all our advantages, *WE* have succeeded in going beyond them.

"Indeed, the longer our experience has been in the navigation of the Icy Seas, and the more intimate our acquaintance with all its difficulties and all its precariousness, the higher have our admiration and respect been raised for those who went before us in these enterprises. Persevering in difficulty, unappalled by danger, and patient under distress, they scarcely ever use the language of complaint, much less that of despair; and sometimes, when all human hope seems at its lowest ebb, they furnish the most beautiful examples of that firm reliance on a merciful and superintending Providence, which is the only rational source of true fortitude in man. Often, with their narratives impressed upon my mind, and surrounded by the very difficulties which they in their frail and inefficient barks undauntedly encountered and overcame, have I been tempted to exclaim, with all the enthusiasm of Purchas :

"How shall I admire your heroic courage,
Ye marine worthies, beyond names of worthiness?"

CHAPTER II.

ATTEMPTS TO GET TO THE NORTH OF HUDSON'S BAY—KNIGHT, BARLOW, AND VAUGHAN—SCROGGS, MIDDLETON—HEARNE, MACKENZIE, PHIPPS, TO REACH THE POLE—COOK AND CLERKE, TO GET N.E. FROM BEHRING'S STRAITS—PICKERSGILL AND YOUNG TO MEET THEM BY DAVIS' STRAITS—NEW FACTS—BREAK-UP OF THE SEA ON THE EAST COAST OF GREENLAND—SIR JOHN BARROW—CAPTAIN SCORESBY—BATCH OF ARCTIC HEROES.

SEVERAL years now intervene, and the attempts made were desultory, and occur at irregular intervals, yet the question of a passage West by the North had not lost its interest. The representation of the enterprising Grosseliez, a Frenchman, now (1688) led to the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Capt. Z. Gillam was despatched by them to Rupert's River to take possession. This Company, in 1719, sent an expedition to the northern part of Hudson's Bay, under Knight, Barlow, and Vaughan, to search for a copper mine as reported by the Esquimaux, all of whom perished, it is supposed, on Marble Island. One John Scroggs was sent in search of them, but the richness of the copper mine seems to have had more influence over his actions than the salvation of his fellow men. The results were unsatisfactory, but sufficient information was elicited upon which to found strong arguments in favour of the existence of a North-West Passage; and Mr. Dobbs unceasingly solicited the Hudson's Bay Company to make an attempt. This, at last, was done under their captain, Christopher Middleton. The result of this voyage never transpired, but it appears to have been most unsatisfactory to Mr. Dobbs, who openly charged the Hudson's Bay Company with "intentionally preventing the discovery." In the end, Mr. Dobbs prevailed on the Admiralty to renew the attempt; and two ships were fitted out (1741), under Captain Middleton and Mr. William Moor. Wager Inlet and Repulse Bay were discovered; they reached the lat. $66^{\circ} 14'$, and from thence saw a Frozen Strait to the eastward, which afterwards led to much controversy, too lengthy here to be entered upon. Dobbs, still less satisfied, charged Middle-

ton with having been bribed by the Hudson's Bay Company; the truth seems never to have come out, but the Admiralty, as if not altogether satisfied, shortly after offered a reward of £20,000 for the discovery of a North-West Passage, and a new expedition, under Mr. William Moor and Mr. Francis Smith, sailed in 1746; they reached Wager Inlet, but otherwise the attempt was abortive. It is greatly to be regretted that the Hudson's Bay Company have given so little encouragement to Arctic exploration, so admirably situated as they are for carrying out the enterprise. The journey of Hearne (1770), and Mackenzie (1789), proved the existence of two large rivers, flowing into the Polar Sea. Great credit attaches to both these journeys, but we return to the order of dates. In 1773, Phipps and Lutwidge* made an attempt to approach the North Pole. This voyage was barren in results as regards the great question. It will be interesting to notice that the failure of Phipps led to the attempt made in 1776 by Behring's Straits, eastward, to reach the Atlantic, under the great Cook and his coadjutor, Capt. Clerke; in connection with these great men, seeking a passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic, Lieut. Pickersgill (in 1776) and Lieut. Young (in 1777) were sent up Davis' Straits, to aid and act in concert with them: these returned after reaching—Pickersgill, $88^{\circ} 10' N.$, and Young, $72^{\circ} 42' N.$

We must now pass over thirty years—for during that time the Great Question seems to have remained in abeyance; but let it not be supposed it was lost sight of, much less forgotten; the same spirit for discovery still existed, still was there; but accursed war, with its licensed cruelty and empty pageantry, led away and distracted the national mind. No sooner was peace restored, and the delirium and sorrow which war had occasioned passed away, when all the probabilities of a North-West Passage became again the subject of inquiry; the trending and position of the lands, the currents and their debris, already known, were again brought forward and reflected on. In 1817 new facts had arisen; it had been observed for two or three years previously that vast quantities of ice, and much larger than usual, had found their way into the Atlantic—so vast as even to affect the climate of our islands,—in short, that there had been a complete disruption of the ices in the North; and that the sea, between Greenland and Spitzbergen, from lat. 70° to 80° , had become open. These facts had not escaped the notice of our whalers, particularly the observant Scoresby. It was reported, also, that ships crossing the Atlantic Ocean going west were beset by the floating masses.

* In this expedition sailed the immortal Nelson as midshipman of the *Careless*.

In the end the subject attracted the attention of the learned in science, and amongst these the late Sir John Barrow. This gentleman, from his position as Secretary to the Admiralty, had access to the best sources of information,—besides, the subject was to his taste, and he gave his clear, penetrating, vigorous mind to a thorough re-examination of it; in which, no doubt, he was greatly aided by the information and practical experience of the talented Scoresby and others.* Again the national feeling became aroused, and again the question shone forth, but now with an aurora of greater brilliancy: the more so, as it viewed the question of a North-West Passage as one peculiarly its own; its olden but now richer theme. A new series of daring attempts were now to be made to solve the question, once and for all. A new era was entered upon; and from the year 1818 expeditions rapidly followed each other—costly, it is true, but complete. No more did the nation's glory rest on the liberality of the private merchant or adventurer; the Government now undertook the responsible task, and the nation paid the cost; the people of England care not for cost, provided the object sought to be attained is properly and completely done; and even though success may not repay the efforts of those to whom they may confide their ardent anticipations, still, while they like to know and see that the reward has been justly deserved, they would not that meritorious service should go unrecompensed. Crazy craft of from ten to fifty tons now gave place to comfortable, safe, and well-equipped ships—floating palaces, of from 300 to 500 tons, compared with which the olden vessels were but as cockboats. Indeed, when one reflects upon what was really done by the old voyagers in their shallops and pinnaces, the matter of astonishment is not that they did so little, but that they, amid the perils of ice and “unknown” coasts, of stormy seas, of narrow straits, treacherous currents, hidden rocks, and rugged shores, all equally unknown, should have done so much, cribbed and cooped up as they were in their tiny craft, no room for exercise of the outward and barely sufficient to satisfy the wants of the inner man.

In 1818 commenced, then, a series of new attempts; and between that year and 1839, Baffin's Bay, which had not been visited since the time of its great discoverer, whose name it justly bears (more than 200 years), was now circumnavigated, and new lands within the Arctic circle, between the 73rd and 75th parallel, extending west from 80° to 112° W., were discovered and made known. Gradually the

* In 1822, Scoresby discovered and visited the east coast of Greenland, lat. 74°, and coasted it to lat. 70° N.

northern coasts of America were defined, from the Castor and Pollux River (in $93^{\circ} 7' W.$) in the east, to Behring's Straits in the west; and new lands and archipelagoes, deep fiords, channels, lakes, and rivers, were added to our maps and charts. The whole round of the sciences were impressed into the service, and yielded a rich harvest; each and all were benefitted, and became more perfect and precious: 1818 to 1839 produced another batch of names of which any country might be proud; a Parry out in 1818, 1819, 1821-24, and 1827; John Ross 1818, 1829-33; Buchan, 1818; Franklin, 1818, 1819, and 1825; Lyon, 1821 and 1824; Hoppner, 1818, 1819, 1821, and 1824; Back, 1818, 1819, 1825, 1833, and 1836; Beechey, 1818, 1819, and 1825; Crozier, 1821-24, and 1827; James C. Ross,* 1818, 1821, 1824, 1827, and 1829; Fitzjames,* &c., &c.; in conjunction with these, a Sabine, 1818, 1819, and 1822; a Richardson, 1819 and 1825; a McCormick, 1827,* &c. Our notices must be brief, but we cannot omit the record of a passing sigh for the untimely fate of poor Hood, 1819; or a note of admiration for the faithful Hepburn, 1819; and the kind-hearted savage, Akaitcho, 1819: justice compels us to add the name of Dr. King, a volunteer in the search for Sir John Ross, 1833, and Messrs. Dease and Simpson, 1837, 1838, and 1839. These names will ever be familiar in Arctic story: some have made mistakes, but even their errors have "lighted"† others to success. There is an intermission now of six years, inactive as far as regards practical operations, but not so as to the mind—every thought gave hope of "the Passage;" still the flame burnt on, lambent but positive, there was the same ardent desire to complete the problem, that problem which had baffled the energy and the skill of centuries. The Passage, too, was all but known, and yet unknown.

* The names thus marked were out in the Antarctic regions under Sir James Ross, 1839 to 1843.

† See Note of N. W. Fox's, Hakluyt Society's Vol., 1849, p. 69:—"Davis and he (Waymouth) did, I conceive, light Hudson into his Straights."

CHAPTER III.

ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY INVITES OPINIONS ON THE NORTH-WEST PASSAGE—SIR JOHN BARROW'S—DR. RICHARDSON'S—SIR JOHN FRANKLIN'S—THE HYDROGRAPHERS'.

To England is due the first attempt to open out the mysteries of the North more than to any other nation. She has made the North-West question her own. "The Arctic Seas were too eminently a theatre of British enterprise and daring to be long deserted, even by those who had experienced the fearful rigours of the climate. No nation had followed up the subject with anything approaching to the ardour of England. Some of the best and bravest of her gallant sons had sought to subdue the spirits of storm, ice, and fog which ruled with despotic sway over their desolate and solitary dominions."* She was for a time defeated—still she nourished the question, and she hoped to solve it. These were the feelings and sentiments of England; it is true the *cui bono* cry would occasionally be heard, but its voice had no power, it was not hearkened to. The counsels of the wise, and the feelings of the patriot, prevailed. The subject involved now the most abstruse questions of science; and they were to be solved for the increase of knowledge for man universally, and for the glory of England in particular. Already (8th February, 1836) had the Royal Geographical Society of London passed a resolution to petition the Government for a fresh expedition to that quarter, and had thrown itself open to receive "Communications on a North-West Passage, and further Survey of the Northern Coast of America,"† and appointed a committee to examine them. These communications are too lengthy for insertion in full; we can therefore only give extracts, but to those who feel an interest in the subject, they are eminently worthy attentive reflection. The matter they contain is most valu-

* "Narrative of Arctic Discovery," J. J. Shillinglaw, 1851, p. 264.

† "Royal Geographical Society's Journal," vol. vi., part i., pp. 34—50.

able, recording as they do the opinions of the most intelligent and most experienced men at this period, 1836.*

The veteran father of modern Arctic enterprise, Sir John Barrow, stands first; he says, "There have probably not been any voyages or land journeys which excited a more lively interest than those for the discovery of a North-West Passage, and those expeditions that were sent out for completing the geography of the northern coast of North America. . . . There are grounds sufficiently strong for believing that the question of the practicability of a North-West Passage, after the experience that has been acquired, will scarcely admit of doubt; if this be so I think that England would be held altogether inexcusable, that she would justly subject herself to the ridicule of the world, were she to suffer any other nation, by her own indifference, to rob her of all her previous discoveries, by passing through the door which she herself has opened. . . . It should not be forgotten, that for the last three hundred years the subject has never been lost sight of by the Government; that it has met with favour and encouragement from almost every successive sovereign; and that several parliaments have promulgated rewards to the extent of £20,000 for its completion: it has thus distinctly and unequivocally become a national object. And when we reflect on the number of brave and enterprising officers it has been the means of bringing forward, the knowledge and intelligence they have acquired and communicated to the world at large in the various branches of science, it is impossible not to wish for the further prosecution of these expeditions. But if, on the contrary, we should allow the completion of them to be snatched away from us by any other Power, we shall sustain a humiliating defeat, and give to our rivals a signal victory—the greatest and best of all victories—the conquest of knowledge; not that kind of ephemeral triumph which follows the destructive conquest of man over man, but that which must live imperishable through all ages, till time shall be no more. . . . It has been practically ascertained, . . . that the current which sets round the Icy Cape, after continuing along the northern coast of America, discharges itself through the Fury and Hecla Strait of Parry into the Atlantic."

After stating several facts from various observations made by Franklin, Richardson, Beechey, Elson, and James Ross, and

* A careful examination of the maps and charts of the time is important; as they give the knowledge that was then possessed, and upon which was based the arguments in favour of renewed Arctic exploration for the solution of the question of a North-West Passage.

recommending "to keep in the open sea, whether covered by ice or not," he thus concludes, pointing to the spot and the probability of a passage :—"We may therefore, I think, safely infer, that between the coast of America and the northern islands (that of Melville and others), there is a broad open sea, open enough for a ship of war to make her way through it. The result of four voyages has shown that no difficulty exists in the navigation of Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait; that out of the latter are several large openings on the southern side, through one of which, perhaps the nearest to that about Cape Walker, a ship would easily pass into that part of the Arctic Sea which I have pointed out; and in such case, I do not think it would be presuming too much to hope that the passage would be accomplished—and perhaps in one year."*

Dr. (afterwards Sir John) Richardson,† one of the soundest and best authorities, having had the advantage of being employed on the two land expeditions, 1819 and 1825, thus records his opinion in a letter addressed to Capt. (now Adm.) Beaufort, R.N., Hydrographer to the Admiralty :—"The search after a North-West Passage, though often relinquished when the want of success has depressed the public hope, has been as often resumed, after a greater or smaller interval, with fresh ardour; and as every one who carefully and dispassionately examines the records of past voyages, and duly considers the currents which successive navigators have observed to set into Behring's Straits, along the Arctic coast, and out of the Fury and Hecla Straits, must be convinced that a water communication between the two oceans does exist to the north of America, so it is no presumption to affirm that this search will not be finally relinquished until it is crowned with success. The lead which England has taken in this enterprise has furnished her with one of the brightest gems in her naval crown; and to those who meet every generous undertaking with the question of 'Cui bono?' it may be replied that the Hudson's Bay fur trade, the Newfoundland cod-fishery, the Davis' Straits whale-fishery, admirable nurseries for seamen, and the discovery of the continent of North America itself, pregnant with consequences beyond human calculation, are the direct results of expeditions that sailed in quest of a North-West Passage.

"But it is not on the existence of this Passage that my argument

* "Royal Geographical Society's Journal," vol. vi., part i., pp. 37—40.

† Dr. Richardson was with the lamented Franklin in the descent of the Coppermine in 1819, and shared the horrors of that expedition; and also with him down the Mackenzie in 1825.

for new expeditions of discovery rests; for were it even proved that, contrary to the opinions of the ablest officers who have sailed the Polar Seas, no practicable channel for ships can be found, still I hold it to be the duty of those who direct the councils of the British empire, to provide for the exploring of every part of his Majesty's dominions."

The Doctor then alludes to the claim the native tribes have on our protection; the expense and the saving arising from the exact determination of the geographical position of places, and the immediate benefits science has received from expeditions of discovery, commerce, &c., &c.; and adds:—"The breadth of the American continent, between the entrance to Hudson's Strait and Cape Prince of Wales, comprises in round numbers 103° of longitude, of which ten remain unknown, between Capt. James Ross's farthest point and Sir John Franklin's Cape Turnagain: there are about six more between the latter officer's most westerly point and Capt. Beechey's *greatest* advance from Behring's Straits; and the unexplored space between the Strait of James Ross and Back's Sea, being twenty-two miles, is rather more than one degree in that parallel. The extent of coast remaining unexplored is therefore small when compared with that which has been already delineated." He continues:—"To complete the survey of the Gulf of Boothia, and establish its connection or separation, as the case may be, with the Strait of James Ross, no better plan can be proposed than the one suggested by Sir John Franklin, of sending a vessel to Wager River." The Doctor, in offering his plan, "which embraces a different part of the coast," says, "I would propose, then, to complete, in the first place, the survey of the coast to the westward of the Mackenzie; and secondly, that to the eastward of Point Turnagain." And he points out by what means it may be done. He concludes, trusting that his or a more efficient plan may be adopted, "and thus provide for the completion of an enterprise which, under his (Sir John Barrow's) fostering care, has made greater progress in a few years than it has done for previous centuries."

We shall now give the opinion of the *much lamented Sir John Franklin*, also addressed to the hydrographer.* Commencing, he says, "the arguments in Dr. Richardson's letter, . . the plans which he suggests . . are full of research and interest, and deserve all the consideration and encouragement which I truly rejoice to perceive they are likely to meet with from the Society. The Doctor alludes,

* "Royal Geographical Society's Journal," vol. vi., part i., pp. 41—46.

in his letter, to some propositions which he knew I made in the year 1828, at the command of his present Majesty, then Lord High Admiral, on the same subject; and particularly to the suggestion as to proceeding from Repulse or Wager Bay. . . . A recent careful reading of all the narratives, connected with the surveys of the Wager and Repulse Bays, and of Sir Edward Parry's voyage, together with the information obtained from the Esquimaux by Sir E. Parry, Sir Jas. Ross, and Capt. Back, confirm me in the opinion that a successful delineation of the coast east of Point Turnagain to the Strait of the 'Fury and Hecla,' would be best attained by an expedition proceeding from Wager Bay; the northern parts of which cannot, I think, be farther distant than forty miles from the sea. . . . The plan, therefore, that I recommend, is to send two vessels to Wager Bay. . . . Keeping outside of Southampton Island, make the best of their way through the Frozen Strait to Wager Bay. . . . The narrowest part of the isthmus appears to be from Savage Sound, though it will probably be found not much broader from Douglas Harbour, where the vessels would be more secure. . . . The relative breadth, however, would be ascertained by a light party in two or three days; and in the most eligible place thus ascertained the portage should be made. . . . I would propose sending two parties from the point on which the embarkation can be effected, the one to trace the coast westward towards the part Capt. Back reached, and onwards to Point Turnagain, if practicable; and the other to follow the east shore of Prince Regent's Inlet, up to the Straits of Hecla and Fury—and further, if necessary to settle the geographical question as to the north-east termination of the land. . . . There is little doubt in my mind of the western party reaching the mouth of Back's River without more than the ordinary interruptions of such a coasting voyage. But here a doubt presents itself to my mind, grounded on the Esquimaux authority, which it is fair to state; viz., whether the supposed strait, between the farthest land seen by Capt. Back and that reached by Capt. James Ross, does exist: if it fortunately do, then the tracing of the coast, as far as Point Turnagain, could be continued by the same course of proceeding; if it do not, then a portage would have to be made to effect that object; the extent of which is not at present known, and which might require more time to accomplish than one season would allow. This doubt causes me to look with particular pleasure on the suggestion of Dr. Richardson, as to completing the survey eastward of Point Turnagain from the Coppermine River; if the land be continuous from

the most northern point seen by Capt. Back to that visited by Capt. James Ross, *and no strait should intervene*, then unquestionably the boats would be best placed on the WESTERN side of that land for the survey of its coast, which might perhaps *be continued up to Cape Walker*, and thereby gain well grounded information for the guidance of the ships, which I trust will be sent on the North-West Passage. Should the strait in question *be found to exist*, then the expedition, proceeding eastward from the Coppermine River, and that tracing the coast westward from Regent Inlet, would in all probability meet, if they should set forward on their respective enterprises the same season, which might be done."

Sir John Franklin concludes, after volunteering again for this arduous service, in these words:—"You know, I am sure, that no service is nearer to my heart than the completion of the survey of the north coast of America, and the accomplishment of a North-West Passage."

We now add the communication from Capt. (now Admiral Sir Francis) Beaufort, Hydrographer to the Admiralty, an authority not to be doubted. In it is reviewed the opinions of the three preceding distinguished men.*

"Every year seems to bring forward some accession of interest to the great question of the North-West Passage and of the northern configuration of America; and the resolution of our Society, at the meeting of the 8th instant (Feb. 1836), that the Government should be petitioned to despatch an expedition to that quarter, having led to the appointment of this Committee, I have ventured to state my sentiments on the three plans that have been suggested.

"One of these plans boldly urges the direct accomplishment of the North-West Passage by sea; the other two confine themselves to the completion of the coast, either by an inland line of communication, or by the transport of boats from Hudson's Bay; and all three are from such high authorities, so strongly recommended, and so ably urged, that I hope, whatever may be the result, the Council will print them in our Journal.

"That there is an open and, at times, a navigable sea passage between the straits of Davis and Behring there can be no doubt in the mind of any person who has duly weighed the evidence; and it is equally certain that it would be an intolerable disgrace to this country were the flag of any other nation to be borne through it before our own.

"Whenever the wisdom of Government shall think fit to solve this

* "Royal Geographical Society's Journal," vol. vi., part i., p. 47.

great problem, I am satisfied *that the mode proposed by Sir John Barrow is the most prudent that could be adopted. By trying one of the eastern openings which he mentions, the vessels would proceed from home fresh and unexhausted, and if met by insuperable obstacles, or arrested by unusual severity of weather, they would be carried back by the prevalent current to the eastward, or they would winter there with security; whereas, if, already harassed by a long voyage round Cape Horn, they were to plunge from the westward into those unknown regions, and if from any cause they were unable to penetrate them, they could neither return against the joint pressure of ice and current, nor communicate their situation to any settlement, nor even hope for assistance. To seize the proper moment for effecting this ambitious object is solely the duty of Government, and the resulting credit, both at home and throughout the world, will be solely theirs. In the meantime, it appears to be no less the duty of the Geographical Society to recommend an humble and more temporary field of action—more appropriate to the nature of our Institution, more easy and economical in its execution, and more certain and rapid in its result.

“Under this impression, I would entreat the Council to take every means they possess of persuading Government to fit out a small expedition this summer for Wager Bay, according to the general plan set forth by Sir John Franklin; and I beg leave here to observe, that completing the coast line would necessarily throw much valuable light on the direction and facilities of the passage, while even the accomplishment of the passage (as supposed to exist) could scarcely contribute anything to the determination of the coast line. Further, an expedition aiming at the passage and failing would do almost nothing for geographical science; whereas, an expedition along the coast, however incomplete, must add something to our existing stock of positive knowledge. If this proposition should be adopted by Government as the principal feature of the plan, I would now suggest that the expedition should consist of two small vessels; that they should sail in May for Wager Strait (Inlet?), where, a full reconnaissance of the isthmus being made, and the opposite gulf being probably gained, one vessel should be comfortably secured for the winter, and the other should return home to impart the progress and prospects of her consort. The object of the above process is, that by gradually uniting the known parts of the coast we should vanquish all difficulties by quiet and moderate efforts, attended by little expense and less risk; and, like a skilful general, basing our operations on points already in possession, we should secure every step of our advance, as well as

preserve every facility for our retreat."* It will at once be seen—every known view of the subject is here clearly and succinctly given—not a single object is passed over or slurred, whether regarding the health and comfort of the crews or their safety, the expense, &c., still all is made subservient to the great object in view—the discovery of "the Passage."

There is yet another communication to which we must refer—one from Sir John Ross* (addressed to Capt. Maconochie, R.N., secretary to the Royal Geographical Society); this communication breathes the same national spirit regarding the North-West Passage. Alluding to a previous meeting of the Society, he says,—“I was gratified to find the question of a North-West Passage was again to be taken into serious consideration,—that my country should gain the glory of deciding a question to which so much importance has been attached.” Sir John gives his “unqualified approval to Sir John Franklin’s plan;” but “observing, however, that much stress has been laid on the easterly current, it may be proper to remark that this current can be fully accounted for,—in the summer by the melting of snow, which produces rivers equal in size to the Thames, and in winter by the continual north winds, which keep the ice in constant motion in Prince Regent’s Inlet, and which we often observed to raise the sea near our hut many feet.† This would produce the effect mentioned, and the easterly current in ‘Hecla and Fury’ Strait is, therefore, no proof of a passage at the bottom of the Gulf of Boothia.”‡ “With respect to the expedition which has been recommended to pursue the route of Sir Edward Parry, although decidedly in favour of the expediency of such an

* “Royal Geographical Society’s Journal,” vol. vi., part i., pp. 47—50.

† We cannot subscribe to this theory to account for the easterly current; the melting of the snow and the wind may have great temporary and local influence, but are insufficient to generate the general easterly current known to exist: numerous instances could be given of the ice being carried to windward by the current,—even in opposition to a strong wind.

‡ True, it is no proof of a passage, nor is it to the contrary; still it favours rather than opposes the idea of one existing. At this time there was quite a controversy as to whether a passage existed between the estuary of the great Fish (Back’s) River and Prince Regent’s Inlet. Sir John Ross, Dr. King, and others, thought there was no passage. Sir George Back, and others (amongst the rest, our humble selves), believed there was. We shall give the opinions of Sir George Back and Dr. King, formed on the same spot; but previous to doing so we will draw attention to a “log of drift wood, but little soddened with water,” found near Point Ogle. The former, by a rational course of reasoning, thinks it came from the Mackenzie from the westward; the latter, from an Indian report of a river (the Fish River?) to the eastward, thinks it came from thence. We will now give

expedition," Sir John "cannot subscribe to the plans proposed for carrying it into effect." In this he alludes to the means to be employed, which we have nothing to do with. The plan for solving the question of a North-West Passage is *here under* consideration. "It is on the probability that a passage exists about due *south* of Melville Island—that is, between it and Cape Walker—that this expedition has been proposed; and although all the indications which were originally held out as imperative and inseparable from its existence, have been, over and over again, disproved by every expedition, I am not now disposed to dispute the question, especially as a proof of its non-existence would be almost equally important.* I admit, therefore, it is still a national question." Sir John then asks, "Why did not Sir Edward Parry attempt, with his ships, the method now pro-

* Here is another assertion betraying either great ignorance or violent prejudice. So far from all the "indications imperative and inseparable" to a passage south between Melville Island and Cape Walker, being "over and over again disproved by every expedition," what will our readers say, when they learn, not a single expedition had been sent in that direction since the time of Parry's first discoveries in 1819 and 1820!

the recorded opinions of these gentlemen as to a Passage:—

SIR GEORGE BACK.*

"To the north-east there were water and ice, and beyond it a dark grey or what is denominated a water sky; while from the east to Cape Hay there was an open sea. Whether the north-eastern clear space is connected with, and a part of, the western gulf of Sir John Ross, I cannot undertake to determine; but I think I am warranted in an opinion that the Esquimaux outline, the sudden termination of Cape Hay, and the clear sea in that particular direction, are strong inferences in favour of the existence of a southern channel to Regent's Inlet."

This is all the evidence that could at the time be afforded on either side. Taking the above named "log of wood," which Dr. King himself supposes came from the eastward, and his "intervening space," we think the argument on both sides in favour of a *passage* to Regent's Inlet. Dr. Rae has since gone over the ground, and proved no passage does exist; still there was every reason to suppose one did; and such was the impression when Sir John Franklin sailed, to which we shall have occasion to revert at a future time. At any rate Sir John Ross could offer no proof to the contrary; and he would have done better to have inquired further for the origin of the easterly current than attempt to get rid of it by an indirect negative assertion. There might be a passage unknown to him, as "Bellot Strait."

* See Back's "Arctic Land Expedition to the Mouth of the Great Fish River," 1833-34-35, pp. 413-14, 424.

† King's "Journey to the Shores of the Arctic Ocean," 1833-34-35.

DR. KING.†

"From Cape Hay, the land, blue in the distance, trended north-north-east, when it dipped the horizon; but a *little space, however, intervened* to a land gradually rising in boldness, following a north-westerly course, the extremes of which were named Points James Ross and Booth. My impression was, that the sea formed a deep bay in that direction."

posed—namely, to push among the ice into the *vortex* of the supposed passage, trusting the rest to Providence?" He then talks of ships of eighteen feet draught of water—this is beside the question—and says,—"I shall point out why," which is more to our subject. "The ice which Sir Edward Parry met at the west end of Melville Island did *not* drift to the southward with a northerly wind, but stopped, and when the pressure increased took an easterly direction—an undeniable proof it met with obstruction in going south, otherwise it would have drifted towards the coast of America by the impulse of the wind, for there was no current; it must, therefore, have met with either land, shoal water, or islands,* over or among which, ships must necessarily pass to reach the said coast." He therefore maintains, that the ships "should draw less water than the surrounding ice;" and adds, "if ships such as the *Terror* and *Erebus* are sent on this service, either by keeping the south shore of Barrow's Strait, or by taking to the ice, the probability is, that they and their crews will never be heard of."† Remarks on ice navigation follow, and the favourable seasons for sailing; and at last the opinion, "that if the question is ever decided, it must be by keeping close to the shore from Cape Walker, westward." We have endeavoured to give the essence of this paper, but from its want of connection we have had much difficulty in doing so.

We have drawn rather largely on the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, not so much from want of other material to prove that inborn unquailing spirit which no obstacle can appal or arrest, much less defeat; but to show that the subject of the "Passage," though prosecuted for centuries, still held potent influence—still incited the nation on to further enterprise, with the repetition of the same self-abnegation that belongs alone to the worthy, the sterling, and the brave. We have referred to these opinions as they prove the feeling was never dormant, and only required a central point, like the Royal Geographical Society, to elicit and make them known. That Society was not backward in the task it had undertaken; it at once drew the attention of Government to a proposed expedition for completing the coast line between Regent's Inlet and the Point Turnagain of Franklin, 1821.

* To say there was no current at the west end of Melville, and that the ice took an easterly direction from obstruction to the south and pressure from the west, betrays ignorance of the experience of Parry. The whole of this passage is the best evidence that can be offered in favour of an easterly current.

† This savours of prophecy, but it is accidental; Sir John Ross was no prophet. Again, the locality he thus speaks of was at the time unknown.

The Government concurred* with the views of the Society, and an expedition was ordered to be fitted out. It was placed under the command of Sir George Back, in the *Terror*. That officer was directed to proceed through Hudson's Strait to Wager River, or Repulse Bay, and having crossed to Regent's Inlet, he was to examine the coast line east to Fury and Hecla Strait and to Cape Kater, and west to the River Back; and after passing Maconochie Island, the continuation of the main shore to Point Turnagain of Franklin, to cross the strait which is supposed to separate the continent of America from the islands to the northern end of it, tracing the shore to the farthest point of Captain James Ross's discovery, and from thence to the spot where he determined "the position of the magnetic pole."* The *Terror* sailed 14th June, 1836, had nearly reached Cape Bylot when she was frozen in, and drifted about in the ice from September to the following July, day by day expecting destruction. Released at last, the ship was found so injured as to render it imperative to return home at once. The *Terror* arrived at Lough Swilly, and was run ashore to prevent her sinking. Perhaps there is no voyage commanding more our sympathy and admiration than this; it is impossible to read their daily detail of peril and exertion without sharing with them "the weariness of heart, the blank of feeling, and the feverish sickliness of taste, which gets the better of the whole man," where "no occupation, no amusement, however ordinarily gratifying, had power to please, or even distract the thoughts."†

In 1837, Messrs. Dease and Simpson were despatched by the Hudson's Bay Company to the westward, to fill up the line of coast between Franklin's farthest west (1825) and Mr. Elson's eastern limit; and in 1838 and 1839 the same gentlemen were directed to trace the coast line eastward, commencing with Franklin's eastern limit (1819), Point Turnagain: they visited Back's explorations at the mouth of the Great Fish River, and succeeded in reaching long. 93° 7' W. The North American coast line was now completed, from Behring's Straits to the above longitude; many new discoveries were made. These boat expeditions reflected great credit, and justly, on Messrs. Dease and Simpson, and threw a transient gleam of lustre on the Hudson's Bay Company, in whose service they were.

Again the question appeared to slumber from 1839 to 1845, and to unobservant eyes to be forgotten; but it was not really so, there were

* See "Narrative of an Expedition in H.M.S. *Terror*, 1836-37, by Capt. Back," pp. 10, 11.

† *Ibid.*, p. 98.

active, intelligent spirits watching over it; the feeling was dormant but not lost, it only rested for a while to renew itself. During this time all that had been done was carefully sifted, weighed, and consolidated for practice, and with more improved appliances. In the end another expedition was urged on the Government, and the *Erebus* and *Terror* were placed under the command of Sir John Franklin. Mr. (now Sir R. I.) Murchison, the President of the Royal Geographical Society, thus alludes to it in his annual address (26th May, 1845):*—"The question of a Passage is now almost narrowed to one definite line of route. With a confident hope of accomplishing this object, Sir John Barrow recently submitted a plan to the First Lord of the Admiralty, with the request that it might be laid before the President and Council of the Royal Society, by whom a resolution was passed in favour of the measure. It was then further referred to those best acquainted with the subject—Sir John Franklin, Sir Edward Parry, Sir James Ross, Lieut.-Col. Sabine, all of whom approved of the plan. With these separate opinions the project was sent to the head of her Majesty's Government; and being by him approved, measures were forthwith taken to carry it into execution. Two ships, the *Erebus* and *Terror*, were immediately placed under the command of Sir John Franklin, and have just sailed for the service in question.

"The route by Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait leads nearly in a direct line about west-south-west to Behring's Strait; and is, therefore, apparently the proper, and, as far as our knowledge hitherto extends, the only maritime route to be pursued on the passage to that strait. There is, indeed, an opening which issues from the northern side of Barrow's Strait, called by Parry Wellington Inlet, and which in appearance is little inferior to Lancaster Sound; but its direction points towards the Pole, and the only chance of its becoming available for the North-West Passage would be that it leads into the open sea, and that the cluster of islands in that direction will be found to cease.

"The track, however, expected to be pursued on this occasion is through the now well-known Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait as far as Cape Walker; on the southern side of the latter, between which and Melville Island the expedition is to take a middle course by the first opening that presents itself after passing the Cape; and steering to the southward, and halfway between Banks' Land (if such exist), and the northern coast of America. Steer directly, or as

* "Royal Geographical Society's Journal," vol. 15., part i., pp. xlv.-v.

far as the ice will admit, for the centre of Behring's Strait. The distance to this from the centre point between Cape Walker and Melville Island is about 900 miles."

It will be seen this plan embraces Sir John Barrow's views in 1836. We have thus but briefly traced the current of feeling in favour of the North-West Passage, and the efforts made by England to solve the question—where can we look for such persistency of purpose and such determination to carry it out? Truly has Britannia made this question her own! We proceed, but shall have occasion, again and again, to revert to this well-considered, judicious plan, so clear in its definition, so auspicious of successful result. Sir John Barrow has been called the "father of modern Arctic discovery." Well has he merited the honourable distinction! After events have thrown a sad and melancholy gloom over the whole subject; but they are not the consequence of the plan itself, still it is questionable if they have not resulted in the departure from it—his plan was simple and rational; it required no straining of the brain, no extraordinary depth of science to understand it. But those who came after him, rejecting its simplicity and clearness, would soar beyond it, the limits of reason, and their capability; hence they became visionary, fitful, giddy, and tortuous; and hence, the plan rejected, the lamentable result we all deplore. But we return to the expedition of 1845. This expedition presented at sight a purely scientific character; but the commercial interests of man, for his comfort and his happiness, were not neglected. Science was there: she came again with her thousand unsolved questions; her votaries were more numerous, better informed, more sound and exact; the subjects had a world-wide interest, and she demanded replies, that she might reward those who seek her, love and follow her for herself. And yet in her course she does not disregard the discovery and development of new sources of commerce and of wealth. To desire, to seek, and to struggle for a higher and more perfect knowledge of our globe, its visible forms and materials, and its invisible, mysterious influences, whether upon or exterior to it, is wise in man; to this he aspires, for this he labours: to labour is his fate; it is his happiness too. Labour produces knowledge; knowledge, power and wealth, and thus are nations benefited: to desire to obtain these, then, is natural; it is the same now as ever, deny it as we may. We see it around and about us, on every side;—here it may be masked under a title, there a ribbon or a medal disguises it: it may exist under a blue, red, or black coat; it may fight in war or bless in peace; under whatever phase, there it is. It pervades all classes, from the

peer to the peasant; and why not? 'It induces man to "look up," and not, "like fat contented ignorance," down on the earth. The attainment involves sacrifices; and he who has not the courage and self-denial, and, we may add, the ambition, to work out laborious days, perchance to be followed by anxious sleepless nights,—so necessary honourably to deserve either or both—not for themselves, selfishly, mark, but for the nobler and wider sphere, mentally and physically, they afford for giving and receiving, and working out the happiness of man,—such an one is false to himself and to his hopes. But the "bright marquesset of gold," that deluded Frobisher, was now to be only secondary; the "Passage" was the paramount object. The new calls of science breathed aspirations of a loftier and purer form; they were more abstruse and exacting, such that had never entered the heads of the "Old Worthies." Their principal reliance was the compass; they thought it would guide them; they knew nothing of its eccentricities: it had, in fact, misguided them; their courses were, therefore, in error. This led to errors in dead reckoning, and with their methods of calculation, as may be imagined, to dead results—confounding themselves and those who were to come after them. To keep the time, to be governed by a watch, and by induction to ascertain their longitude, and so "shape a course," they had yet to learn. As to courting sweet Luna, "Fair Goddess of the Night," and woo from her a path for their "pinnesses" and their "shallops" "o'er the waste of waters," such witchery was undreamed of.

But now the compass was to be neutralized of its anomalous movements; and as the whole subject of terrestrial magnetism was undergoing inquiry, the North was expected to contribute its share in the investigation: "a final attempt to make a North-West Passage," remarks Colonel Sabine, "would render the most important service that now remained to be performed, towards the completion of the magnetic survey of the globe." Occult and mysterious, this demanded the most unwearied care and zeal, and the soundest intellect; only these qualities could be made available; even the hand that could not preserve its most delicate touch amid exposure, and benumbing cold, was of little service. More information of the earth, its crust and its components, and all that live upon it, whether plants or animals; the phenomena above, and the heat within it; in short, all that concerns it, whether the air we breathe, the earth we tread upon, or the waters that encompass it, and their subtle influences,—all these were to obtain the careful attention of the expedition. But over and

above all, the solution of the vexed question—the discovery of a North-West Passage.

We need not say, to meet these requirements and to clear all remaining doubts, none but the most active, talented, and experienced, were chosen for this most important expedition. The peculiar nature of the service required, demanded, too, all that was manly, daring, persevering, and enthusiastic; all that fortitude and love of enterprise which so eminently characterized the "Olden Voyagers," and which renders the memory of them so dear to every Englishman, the preference being given to those who had already served on Polar expeditions, and who had acquitted themselves with credit. Distinguished for all these qualities amongst others was Sir John Franklin. He was selected for the chief command in the *Erebus*. A more judicious selection could not have been made. Possessed of a well-regulated, well-informed mind, he had dared the perils and the privations of the Arctic regions by sea and by land, and had acquired much experience, and good, sound, practical knowledge. His feeling, too, was with the enterprise:—"No service is nearer to my heart than the completion of the survey of the north coast of America, and the accomplishment of a North-West Passage."* Capt. Crozier was appointed to the second command in the *Terror*. This experienced officer had been with Sir Edward Parry in 1821, 1824, and 1827; and also with Sir James Ross to the Antarctic regions: he had "borne the fierce extremes of either Pole!" Commander Fitzjames acted in the *Erebus* under Franklin. Chivalrous, talented, and kind-hearted, he had seen good service, and was a most efficient officer. These were the chosen leaders of this important expedition; the other officers were selected with equal regard to good service and ability. When we name such officers as "Gore," late in the Antarctic regions with James Ross, and with Back in the *Terror*; as Fairholme, of the Niger Expedition, &c., it will readily be imagined what sort of stuff they were made of: the junior officers were of the most promising, and full of life, as we well remember witnessing on a visit to the *Erebus* just prior to her departure; the crews were picked men from among the most steady, daring, and efficient as seamen; in fact, the *élite* of maritime England was there. The ships were fitted and strengthened by every process of ingenuity to meet and overcome every obstacle, and for the convenience and comfort of the officers and crews; in short, everything that could be suggested in regard

* "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society," vol. vi., part i., p. 46.

to provisions, and even little luxuries, for change of diet and the preservation of health, was supplied. Thus commanded, thus equipped, the *Erebus* and *Terror* sailed from the Thames the 26th May, 1845, bearing England's choicest sons on a mission of universal interest; with them followed the sincerest prayers, the most ardent aspirations were breathed for their safe return; truly they went forth from amongst us with the world's "God speed!"*

Before we give the instructions given to Sir John Franklin for his guidance in the conduct of this expedition, it may not be deemed unfitting if we again bring before our minds the locality chosen for its operations, the relative position of its lands and seas, and the chances they offered of success for the final accomplishment of the now more deeply interesting question of a North-West Passage. It is the more imperative that we should do so here, because so many conflicting opinions have arisen since its departure, as to lead those not fully informed on the subject to the conclusion, that the expedition had no determinate object, that the instructions were indefinite; and hence, that Sir John Franklin and his gallant companions were sent on a wild goose chase. Such a conclusion would be altogether in error. The subject of the expedition was not only definite, but the locality chosen offered the best prospect for the final settlement of the long-agitated problem. We have already noticed the various opinions submitted to the Royal Geographical Society in 1836 on this subject: it will be seen that the plan adopted, to complete which the Franklin Expedition was specially directed, owed its origin to the reflective and vigorous mind of the late Sir John Barrow; than whom no man was more competent to form a sound opinion. The series of expeditions from the year 1818, which had by their discoveries shed so much lustre on the British name, all originated with him. In order fully to understand the plan, it will be necessary to refer back to the Arctic charts of the year 1845; without these it is rather difficult to throw the ideas back twelve years, and to realize the meagre features of the charts Franklin had for his guidance, with the crowded appearance they present now (1857); and yet they contained the essence of many a hard-earned renown, from Parry in 1819 to Dease and Simpson in 1839. It will be observed, the widest opening westward is by the way of Davis' Strait, Baffin's Bay, and Barrow's Strait. The bottom of Prince Regent's Inlet had not been visited, it therefore remained undelineated. A communication was supposed

* The expedition was accompanied to the Whalefish Islands, Baffin's Bay, by the transport *Barretto Junior*, Lieut. (now Comm.) Griffith, laden with extra stores.

to exist between it and Back's Great Fish River; but it ought to be noticed, Prince Regent's Inlet had hitherto been found so ice-clogged that it offered very little hope of a passage to the westward that way; the only prospect of success was the route we have above noticed,—viz., that by Barrow's Strait. As no attempts had been made in the direction of Melville Island, west of 90° W., since Parry's celebrated successful voyage in 1819 and 1820, what was known in that quarter was due alone to the enterprise and careful observation of that distinguished officer. Any assumption regarding it must, therefore, be founded alone on his authority; all beyond was purely speculative. The chart, then, of Parry, in 1819 and 1820, will be all-sufficient. Now, taking the south side of Barrow's Strait, and going west on the parallel of about $74^{\circ} 15'$ N., a coast line is indicated between Capes Clarence and Bunny; a gap or open space then occurs of about two and a half degrees of longitude, or about forty-one miles in this latitude; a shaded spot follows, Cape Walker; from this Cape to Banks' Land an extensive opening presents itself of about seventeen degrees of longitude, or about 290 miles, called Parry or Melville Sound; this opening offered every reasonable prospect of a passage to the southward and westward. It is true, the southern limit of Banks' Land was not known, nor were the northern limits of Wollaston and Victoria Lands; still it was hoped a passage might be found in the blank of 240 miles between Banks' and Wollaston Lands, or between the latter and Victoria Lands; and the 120th degree of west longitude being reached on or near the coast of the American continent, the question of "the Passage" would be solved, as beyond that meridian west to Behring's Strait no land is visible to the north from that coast. From this it will be seen that the impediments arising from the presence of land bear no comparison with the encouraging prospects offered by the presumed extent of water: hence every feature gave promise of "a Passage," and cheerful hope of speedily realizing the long-sought object. It was upon this promise of success, no doubt, the veteran Sir John Barrow founded his plan: it presented the most auspicious future, and hence its adoption by the Government. We will now turn to the north side of Barrow's Strait, along which the enterprising Parry was the first to navigate; it is marked by a greater extent of land, broken up apparently into islands. That enterprising commander, with the exception of Melville Island, saw only the southern extremities of those lands or islands: the passages between led to the north. One broader than the rest he named the Wellington Channel; he describes it as a "noble channel," "more

than eight leagues in width.* But he did not stop to examine them. No one knew, therefore, where they would ultimately lead, and so they remained up to the year 1845. All to the north, then, of 75° N., between 80° and 115° W., with the exception we have noticed, was unknown and unlimited, whilst by the southern route a few days of successful navigation would bring the fortunate explorers on known ground, with a sea extending to Behring's Strait. Thus far the plan: we will now give the Instructions founded upon it. We omit the preamble, and the sections into which it is divided, not immediately bearing on our object, which is to show where the Franklin Expedition was sent; and that the orders issued for its guidance were clear and explicit. These Instructions are dated May 5, 1845:†—

"Section 5. Lancaster Sound, and its continuation through Barrow's Strait, having been four times navigated without any impediment by Sir Edward Parry, . . . will probably be found without any obstacles from ice or islands; and Sir Edward Parry having also proceeded from the latter in a straight course to Melville Island, and returned without experiencing any, or very little difficulty, it is hoped that the remaining portion of the passage, about 900 miles, to Behring's Strait may also be found equally free from obstruction; and in proceeding to the westward, therefore, you will not stop to examine any openings either to the *northward* or southward in that strait, but to continue to push to the westward without loss of time, in the latitude of about 74½°, till you have reached the longitude of that portion of land on which Cape Walker is situated, or about 98° W. *From that point we desire that every effort be used to endeavour to penetrate to the southward and westward, in a course as direct towards Behring's Strait as the position and extent of the ice, or the existence of land at present unknown, may admit.*

"Section 6. We direct you to *this particular part* of the Polar Sea as affording the *best prospect* of accomplishing the *Passage* to the Pacific, in consequence of the unusual magnitude, and apparently fixed state, of the barrier of ice observed by the *Hecla* and *Griper* in the year 1820, off Cape Dundas, the south-western extremity of Melville Island; and we therefore consider that loss of time would be incurred in renewing the attempt in that direction: but should your progress in the direction before ordered be arrested by ice of a permanent appearance, and that when passing the mouth of the strait between Devon and Cornwallis Islands, you had observed that it was

* See Parry, "First Voyage for the Discovery of a North-West Passage," p. 50.

† See Parliamentary Paper, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition," 1848, pp. 3 to 7.

open and clear of ice, we desire that you will duly consider, with reference to the time already consumed, as well as to the symptoms of a late or early close of the season, whether *that channel* might not offer a more practicable outlet from the archipelago, and a more ready access to the open sea, where there would be neither islands nor banks to arrest and fix the floating masses of ice; and if you should have advanced too far to the south-westward to render it expedient to adopt this new course before the end of the present season, and if, therefore, you should have determined to winter in that neighbourhood, it will be a matter for your mature deliberation, whether in the ensuing season you would proceed by the above-mentioned strait, or whether you would persevere to the south-westward, according to the former directions.

"Section 7. You are well aware, having yourself been one of the intelligent travellers who have traversed the American shore of the Polar Sea, that the groups of islands, that stretch from that shore to the northward to a distance not yet known, do not extend to the westward further than about the 120th degree of western longitude, and that beyond this, and to Behring's Strait, no land is visible from the American shore of the Polar Sea."

We have given these sections in full; but they may be condensed into a very few words, embracing three points. First, the expedition is directed to proceed to about $74\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ N., and 98° W., to a spot in near vicinity to Cape Walker. Secondly, From thence to the south-west, towards Behring's Strait. Thirdly, If arrested by ice or land in that direction, and Wellington Channel was seen in passing it to be open and clear of ice, the alternative was given, either to proceed up that channel, or to persevere to the south-westward.

These are the Instructions given to Sir John Franklin when he sailed: they do not admit of doubt; their object and intent are obvious. Still we cannot but observe, there are omissions of the gravest character. For example, there is no mention of rendezvous, nor of depôts to fall back upon in case of separation or accident; no expectation held out of relief from home. The expedition was left to rely solely on its own resources. Surely, there was a want of thought and fostering care in these omissions, for those who were about to dare the rigours of an Arctic climate. We can only account for such apparent neglect in the feeling that was at the time prevalent, that the Arctic Seas were navigable, with very little difficulty, "even unto the Pole." The gallant Franklin himself seems to have entertained the same idea. These views had arisen probably out of the

successful voyage of Parry,* or the assumed existence of a Polar Ocean: hence this seeming want of necessary precaution. Again, the solution of the "Great Question" involved all thought; no dull, throbbing, remote probability of what might occur found favour to mar, much less to cloud, the happy, hopeful future; it was invested with the brightest anticipations of success. With such joyous feelings, with such confidence and determination to conquer all difficulties that might oppose it, sailed the Franklin Expedition. Alas, that its future should involve a mystery!

Perhaps at no period of our history, or under any circumstances, has an expedition left our shores so well equipped or provided for, or carried with it so much of feeling and heartfelt solicitude for its welfare and ultimate success in the great object for which it departed from us, or for which more anxious, fervent prayers have been offered for its safe return to reap the glory and reward of achieved perilous enterprise, than did the Franklin Expedition.

Year after year have the same feelings been exhibited throughout the country, with all the sincerity of the deepest interest; from the highest to the lowest, in Parliament and out, all have united in one common expression of sympathy for our long absent navigators, coupled with the desire to institute the most rigid search to recover (if it were possible) and restore the missing ones to their country and their home.

Twelve years of anxiety and painful doubt, supported alone by hope, for "hope of all passions most befriends us here!" have passed away since Franklin and his gallant associates left us.

Expedition after expedition has been despatched in search of them, guided by the clearest heads, the coolest judgments, and the best of hearts: some by the east, others by the west; some overland, others by sea: some by the Government, backed by all its resources; others by private means, suggested by the most exalted feelings, and sanctified by the calls of suffering humanity. Amongst these latter stands prominently forth the extraordinary efforts of Lady Franklin herself. What continued personal sacrifices has she not made! What inde-

* That enterprising commander made his principal discoveries, including that of Prince Regent's Inlet, in thirty-three days; during which he ran over thirty degrees of longitude.—Deducting the time occupied exploring that inlet, his run from Lancaster Sound to Winter Harbour was done in eighteen days; and, taking his extreme limit west in thirty days, over thirty-three degrees of westing, or, including Prince Regent's Inlet to his farthest westerly point from Lancaster Sound, the whole was done in forty-five days, over thirty-three degrees of longitude.

fatigable perseverance has she not exhibited! What has not this noble lady, this devoted wife, attempted to search out and follow to the rescue her gallant husband and his devoted companions! Wherever hope lent a ray, there has she been unshaken by the past, firm in the present, and trustful in the future, aiding and assisting by her example, her presence, and her counsel, the manly hearts around her, infusing her own untiring spirit into them, and giving firmness, strength, and consistency to the whole. Such the Government expeditions, such the private expeditions, and such those fitted out under the auspices of Lady Franklin herself.

Our transatlantic brethren—for the wide, wild wave cannot efface the tie of blood—have felt and acted, have been up and doing, in the munificent Grinnell and generous Peabody,* with the ready De Haven and the intelligent Kane, with the "Advances" and the "Rescues," a small but gallant band.

Brave, warm-hearted France, inspired by the love of mighty daring, whether in the cause of science or in the field, was there. The votaries of science were missing and deemed to be suffering; she lent her Bellot and De Bray, two sons worthy of her, worthy the cause and worthy the profession to which they belonged. Poor René Bellot! chivalrously humane! we would that we had been spared the sad task of chronicling your death!

"Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career;
And fitly may the stranger, lingering here,
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;
For ————— he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept."

"De Bray leaves with the good will and good wishes of all officers and men; he has done this service much credit."† In him we had another "noble specimen;" "like the lamented Bellot he has acquired

* In the recent desire shown to appreciate the unparalleled generosity and feeling of the sons of the "fairer daughter" for the long missing hapless sons of the "fair mother," we find no notice of the name of Peabody. The noble-minded Grinnell cannot suffer by the mention of this omission, but the grateful feeling of the "fair mother" may; the omission cannot be designed, and therefore should be rectified at once. Mr. Peabody is known to us over twenty years of conduct, marked by a kindness of heart and a liberality of thought and action, that has done more to break down the little differences and jealousies between America and England than all the efforts of diplomatists: justly has he earned the esteem of both mother and daughter.

† See Blue Book, 1855; "Further Papers," &c., Capt. Kollett's Letter, p. 78.

the warmest sympathies of all who have had the pleasure of his society. I earnestly hope that our sentiments may be made known to his Government, and that his merit may meet with the distinction it so richly merits." * Returned to his dear France and his home, yet his name will ever be held in high respect and esteem by Englishmen.

America and France especially demand the grateful thanks of England, nor may we forget the good offices of Russia—Europe felt. The wide, wide world looked on with deep interest for those who went forth from amongst us on a great and glorious errand, whose end and objects were universal. Hence its feeling, its sympathy for the gallant Franklin, and his no less gallant officers and crews; and hence, too, its solicitude for all those that followed in the perilous search that they might be recovered.

But again we turn to the searching squadrons; no joyful demonstration marked their return. Alas! they have failed to realize the object for which they were sent; they have been unable, with all their hardy daring, their energy, their endurance and their sufferings, to discover farther traces of the lost navigators; they have been unsuccessful. Their regrets are feelingly expressed, in every variety of form, in their official reports. Let no man say they have not "done their duty;" we shall show to the contrary. If there exists a poor worn-out spirit, prostrate with "that sickness of heart which arises from hope deferred," or a discontented, over expectant, or less amiable being, who thinks more might have been done, let such read the Arctic reports, and learn from those valuable, particularizing documents what has been done by their more than equally disappointed (from want of success) gallant countrymen. Having done so, they will rise with a changed and better spirit—one rather of admiration and encomium. If prolonged enduring effort—if dragging extreme weights (life-sustaining and therefore not to be lessened) over rugged surfaces, long distances, continued day by day so long as to institute a comparison unfavourable to the powers of the horse; now sleeping in damp and wet, or thanking cruel frost for the dryness it brings; and now, under an intensity of cold of which we have no conception, many degrees below zero;—surely, if aught has, these have a claim on the better feelings of our nature.

No! no one can doubt the untiring energy and perseverance of our sailors, whether officers or men; and who shall gainsay

* See Blue Book, 1855, "Further Papers," &c.; Sir Edward Belcher's Letter, p. 68.

their feeling? for who has not noticed with admiration their simple-minded kind-heartedness heightened often to chivalrous daring and utter regardlessness of self, at the call of distress? But in this case, with more than 100 of the flower of their countrymen, on a cherished but perilous question, in jeopardy, with the baneful breath of the north wind rustling wild and mournful in their ears, singing, perchance, the sad requiem of their long absent friends, urging them to the rescue, who shall dare say they were not sensitively alive to the sacred call of the holy mission on which they had entered? Sailors have, with rare exceptions, ever done their duty in times past, and, we thank God, our sailors are not at all altered; they may be "rough," but they are always "ready." It may not be out of place here to give proof of what they have done. The whole of the north side of Barrow's Strait has been searched to the parallel of 78° N.; east to the long. of 80° W.; and west to Melville and Prince Patrick's Islands to 125° W. This includes all the passages between the Parry Islands—the over-estimated, elusive Wellington Channel, Penny's Sea beyond, and the new islands arising out of its discovery to the north and north-east of it, converting Jones's Sound into a strait. On the south side of Barrow's Strait, Regent's Inlet to Bellot's Strait on the east, and to the west the coast line between Port Leopold to Cape Bunny; the east and west coasts of Peel's Sound, the former to lat. $72^{\circ} 38'$ N., and the latter to $74^{\circ} 45'$ N.; and from Cape Walker to the west and south, to lat. 72° N., and long. 103° W. Over land and over sea, the whole Arctic coast-line of America, from Behring's Strait east to 105° W., has been examined; also from the bottom of Regent's Inlet to 95° W. The northern and western limits of Wollaston and Banks' Lands, including Baring Island and Albert Land; the southern limits of Wollaston and Victoria Lands eastward to 100° W. Here, then, is surely more than proof, if proof were wanting, of the indomitable energy and perseverance of our sailors; but there is a space yet blank on our charts, the particular space to which the energies of the Franklin Expedition were specially directed; that remains even yet unsearched. It lies between 103° and 115° W.

In the prosecution of the extended search that has been made, it is only justice to the gallant officers and men to say, that where they were directed to go, the search has been complete; their exertions have given to England another kingdom, but, alas! it has been dearly purchased. This is highly honourable to our sailors, and geographically it has added another wreath to Britain's well-earned laurels—a wreath pure and

unstained by the hateful mark of blood. Still there is the sacrifice; those whom they sought, they have not found; and while we cordially admit they have done their duty, the questions yet remain,—“What has become of the gallant Franklin and his companions? Have we sought them in the right direction?”

Seeing, then, that every effort of all the searching squadrons has failed to trace the course the Franklin Expedition took after leaving Beechey Island (1846); seeing that the important relics brought home by Dr. Rae and Capt. Collinson, R.N., while they are highly suggestive, lead to no positive conclusion; we are compelled to confess, however painful the thought, that we are as ignorant now of the position and the fate of the Franklin Expedition as we were in 1846; all is equally inexplicable and apparently mysterious now as then. But are there no reasons to be assigned why we have been unable, with all our exertions, to penetrate the gloom, and reveal the secret? Surely there must have been some error somewhere for this want of success; for we cannot believe that an expedition, acting under definite instructions, can have passed away entirely; we cannot realize the idea that both ships, with their masts and yards, their boats, &c., with their ready, talented officers and crews, can have been wholly lost, without leaving some vestige of their former existence, some mark to lead to the fatal scene of the sad catastrophe; it seems altogether improbable. We ask, then, Would it not be wise to inquire,—to throw our thoughts back on the past, and re-examine the plans and measures adopted for the recovery of our unfortunate countrymen,—whether, in selecting the course that has been pursued, we have been guided by a sound judgment in this momentous matter? Surely, if ever there was a case requiring a sound decision, unwarped by prejudice, by routine, by ignorance, by rumour, or by feeling, it is this. Unhappily, we know too well now the inefficacy of the plans adopted; they have failed to realize the object sought. Still, does it not behove us to inquire whether we have applied the best means, and given the right direction, to the efforts of our searching squadrons? These questions it were well to consider. We are all predisposed to particular views and pre-conceived notions, professional or otherwise. Routine infests and imparts its influence to all bodies of men, whether afloat or ashore; it is seen in all establishments, naval and military, offices, manufactories, everywhere; the aged adopt it, and call it experience; the young reject it, and term it dotage. Ignorance is bold and intrusive, and rumour retails her fictions, while feeling “no soft medium

knows." Each and all have a power over the mind, and baleful, too often, are the effects; we pray they may not have influenced the decisions on this distressful subject. We have already claimed for our sailors the merit that is justly their due for their continued, daring, and unwearied exertions. As to the means employed in the search, they were, without doubt, perfect, for they combined all the advantages of the two extreme opinions—expeditions by land and sea. It remains, then, to consider, Has a right direction been given to the efforts of the searchers? Has all been done that could have been done? Here we pause.

Before we reply to these important questions, it is no less imperative that we should inquire upon what principle the plans of search should have, and have been founded. We know the original plan and intentions of the voyage, and the instructions given to Sir John Franklin (when he sailed), with the hope of completing *that plan* and *those intentions*. Have we aught beside? Has any new fact arisen to alter or suspend either one or the other? We can easily conceive that any subsequent change of circumstances, such as Sir John Franklin being unable to fulfil either of the primary points of his instructions, would necessarily involve a change in his course of action; but from the time he sailed (1845) not a particle of evidence exists to prove that he was prevented or unable to do so. We are, then, in the same position as we were in 1845; we have, in short, only the *Instructions we gave him on his departure to guide us to him*. They and they alone can or should instruct us how to follow him. Here, then, is the principle upon which the plans for search should have been based. His Instructions direct him first to a given point near Cape Walker; second, from thence to the south-west; third, if prevented by obstacles in that direction, and favourable prospects offering in another (Wellington Channel), he had the option either still to persevere to the south-west, or to adopt the more favourable prospect by Wellington Channel. Now, have we, in forming our plans of search, recognized such a principle? that is, have we founded them upon these Instructions? If, in the absence of other rules to guide us, we have departed from them, inasmuch as we have departed, have we strayed from the only guide we had to him, and involved ourselves in the mazes of uncertainty. We know the expedition reached Beechey Island; we have no positive proof that it was crippled or lost there; we therefore must conclude it sailed from that island. Here all that is positively known ends; still we hold it reasonable to assume that the expedition, after its departure,

attempted to fulfil the primary point (section 5th) of its Instructions, that is, that it attempted to reach Cape Walker, and to get to the south-west. All beyond this is dark, but *not sealed* in mystery.

Now, what have been our plans for the recovery of the Franklin Expedition? what the instructions given to the various searching squadrons for the attainment of so desirable, so humane an end? We speak particularly of those sent by the way of Barrow's Strait; for there is not a doubt that all the land expeditions through America to the Arctic Sea, and also those by sea *via* Behring's Strait, originated out of a just sense of the probability of the Franklin Expedition having, by a south-west course from Cape Walker, as ordered, either made the passage, or approached the American coast so nearly as, in case of distress, wreck, or of abandoning the ships, to offer the best means of escape from the perils of the North. The fact of sending expeditions in these directions indicates, too, that the tenor of the Instructions given to Franklin was understood, viz., from about Cape Walker to penetrate in a south-west direction.

We turn, then, to those sent by Barrow's Strait. Here, latterly, a widely different principle seems to have been acted on from that upon which it is known and admitted that the Franklin Expedition was ordered to follow. Cape Walker, and thence in a south-west direction, seems to have been forgotten, or only partially thought of; or why have directed the search to be made to the north of Barrow's Strait, particularly by the Wellington Channel, before completing the examination of the southern side, west of Cape Walker, that is, Parry's or Melville Sound? Certainly the latter should have been our first object, especially as that unknown space involved the spirit of the original plan, which Sir John Franklin was instructed to complete; and we had no proof of its impracticability, no reason to induce a departure from the Instructions given to him. It is true, Franklin had the alternative, in case of insurmountable obstacles presenting themselves to the south and west, to return and make the attempt by Wellington Channel; but that he was shut out in that southern direction by such obstacles we had no knowledge, no new facts to prove. It therefore follows, that by leaving the space between Cape Walker and Banks' Land unsearched or incompletely examined, for the north, we have departed from the right direction, and the hope of finding our hapless countrymen.

We cannot understand this, we cannot comprehend, much less appreciate, the soundness of any judgment or plan that orders an expedition in a precise direction, and then searches for it in a direction

at right angles to that in which it was ordered. This, we fear, has been the fatal error, and hence we mourn the long absence of our missing, if not lost, countrymen. For these reasons we cannot satisfactorily convince ourselves that the search for them has been complete, or that they have been sought in the right direction; consequently all has not been done that could or should have been done. We have referred to the plans for search adopted in the past, and we know their barren results, notwithstanding the extreme efforts that have been made on the part of those appointed to carry them out: the fruitless past may, nevertheless, yield us instructive lessons for the future. We have seen that plan after plan has been adopted, and, what is rarely the case, has been well carried out, and yet all have ended unsuccessfully; and so far from assisting to clear the obscurity and the gloom that envelops this mournful subject, they have rather tended yet more to embarrass and mystify it. Their baseless structure and utter insufficiency are proved by the painful doubt in which they leave the sad subject after seven years of laborious search; they have ended by telling us where the Franklin Expedition is not, rather than where it is. But any plan, however inconsiderate and wild, could have told this, and perchance might have told us more. We must confess we are not surprised at their universal failure, for they were founded on mere assumption, an assumption antagonistic to the only guide we had, viz., the Instructions given to the Franklin Expedition; hence, loss of time and distressing disappointments. The plans that have sought in the north for an expedition that was directed to the south-west, carried within themselves the elements of their own failure. This would have been of little consequence, if they had not involved the safety of the expedition. Still one feels quite at a loss to account for such extreme aberration of ideas on a question so clear and distinct.

After what we have expressed, the conflicting nature of the opinions existing on this subject is not greatly to be wondered at; and yet the original plan of the voyage for the discovery of "the Passage," as also the Instructions embodying it for the guidance of Sir John Franklin, are, as we have shown, simple and clear in their object and direction; but we have departed from them, and hence confusion reigns. It is clearly obvious that, where we sent him, it was our duty to follow, if we would hope to find him; we have not done this, and the extreme differences between the direction given to the searchers and the sought has not only failed to find the lost expedition, but has contributed to encourage erratic ideas on the

subject: the consequence is, that which was simple and clear has become involved and confused. If those who are supposed to be acquainted with the original intention of the voyage thus differ, can we be astonished that others less informed (a class always more confident and self-opinionated) should set themselves up for judges, and add their indigested and obscure notions to the mass, until at last the whole becomes, as we find it, chaotic, and a sad mystery? Such is the state of uncertainty regarding this memorable expedition, that while some doubt if it ever left Beechey Island at all, others think it attempted a passage by the way of Peel's Sound, and was lost there; some assert it was lost in Regent's Inlet, whilst others think the catastrophe occurred on its homeward voyage. Some question the intent of the Instructions, and doubt the clearness that admits of so many and such various interpretations; others by their opinions would lead one to the conclusion that the Admiralty did not know exactly to what quarter they had sent the expedition; for some have asserted determinately that it went up Wellington Channel; others have thought Jones's Sound; and even Smith's Sound has had its advocates; but few have believed that the expedition followed the direction of its Instructions, and endeavoured to get west and south. Even the excellent-hearted Franklin himself has not escaped animadversion. Some have said he had his own views, and only waited his opportunity to carry them out, regardless of the Admiralty Instructions; some have even doubted his capacity afloat; others censure his not leaving despatches here, and others there, especially at Beechey Island; some say he was too old, and others too daring; and so on, without end. All of these opinions are the offsprings of a fevered brain; for they do not originate from the plan of the voyage. We have not a particle of proof that Franklin ever did otherwise than attempt to carry out his Instructions, as in the course of these pages we shall endeavour to show. We therefore shall leave these crude absurdities, called opinions, to be remarked upon anon.

We have said the conduct and character of Sir John Franklin have been much animadverted upon (all public men are more or less open to this), but we should feel we were guilty of a dereliction of duty in the task we have assigned ourselves, if we did not at once enter our protest against the calumniators of this talented and enterprising man. Before mentioning our own opinion, we will record the opinions of those who, from long intimacy and friendship, are best capable of judging of his character, whether private or professional.

Sir Roderick I. Murchison, President of the Royal Geographical

Society, in his annual address, *May 26, 1845, after noticing the recent departure of the *Erebus* and *Terror*,* says:—"As far as depends on my judicious and enterprising friend, Sir John Franklin, and his energetic officers and seamen, I have the fullest confidence that everything will be done for the promotion of science, and for the honour of the British name and navy, that human efforts can accomplish. The name of Franklin alone is, indeed, a national guarantee; and proud shall we geographers be if our gallant Vice-President shall return after achieving such an exploit, and gladly, I am sure, would we then offer to him our presidential chair as some slight recompense for his arduous labours."

Sir Francis Beaufort (Hydrographer) thus speaks: "Sir John Franklin is not a man to treat his orders with levity;"† and Sir Edward Parry reiterates the observation of the Hydrographer. Sir John Richardson says:—"It is admitted by all who are intimately acquainted with Sir John Franklin, that his first endeavour would be to act up to the letter of his Instructions." These authorities may suffice to show the estimation in which Sir John Franklin was held, by those eminently capable of forming an opinion on his merits.

The character of this great and good man can be enhanced by no eulogium of ours; our opinion avails nothing; but, being of the world, moving in and observant of it, we are wishful to see justice rendered, and the palm awarded where it is most due. We take a deep interest in the "Question," and in Arctic matters generally, more especially since the "Father of Arctic enterprise" aroused anew the dormant (never extinct) spirit of British feeling, for further efforts to reveal the hidden secrets of the North. As such, let it not be ascribed to presumption if we offer the ground of our faith in the man,—how we learned to appreciate the high qualities of Sir John Franklin. Antecedents will, and should ever influence, and these were all his own, were all in his favour. He had often been selected for Arctic service—in fact, had been reared amidst the perils of ice and storm, by land and by sea; there he gained and perfected his experience. Science acknowledged him as hers, for his labours were constant to solve her Arctic problem. No wonder, then, that he should be selected for this important command. Though tried by danger and deprivation in extrema, even where hope seemed lost, and sorrow and distress alone remained, still he did not despair, for he had learned

* See "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society," vol. xv., part i., p. 46.

† Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition," pp. 93, 103, 107.

to rely where reliance can alone be placed, and he gathered confidence where hope gave no sign. The records of his career tell of abandonment, of hunger, of murder, and of death; still he preserved the equanimity of his soul in the most fearful situations. He was kind and humane, and his followers, and all about him, knew it; even the savage felt its softening influence; when the white man had forgotten his fellow white man he relieved him in his extremity! Who can read of the generous Akaitcho and his tribe, and the noble sacrifices they made for him, without confessing the fascinating power of this good man's example over the "untutored Indian?" The idea of his disregarding his Instructions is simply ridiculous; he knew how to obey as well as to command. In whatever light we view this great man's character, we are compelled to acknowledge a more fitting commander could not have been chosen; let the tongue of slander, then, cease. Of this we may rest assured, that should futurity ever raise the awful veil, and reveal to us the fate of Sir John Franklin and his devoted officers and crews, it will be found they have dared death, and mayhap have met it, in the desire to fulfil their Instructions, and to complete the great object of their hazardous enterprise, for their country's honour and their own.

We are the less inclined to hear blame attached to Sir John Franklin and his gallant officers and crews, inasmuch as they were chosen for their chivalrous devotion to the "Great Question" in which they had embarked, and we have not a tittle of evidence in proof that they were faithless to the noble cause, or the plan and instructions by which it was to be achieved. Had we at home but continued to follow the principles of that wise plan on which the voyage was founded! had we but adopted the tenor of those simple instructions in sending out our searching squadrons, all might now have been well, and we had not to lament, with feelings of bitter regret, the terrible uncertainty hanging over the fate of this long-missing expedition.

The *Erebus* and *Terror*, as we have before noticed, sailed from the Thames May 26, 1845. They arrived safely at the Whalefish Islands. Sir John Franklin, in a letter to the Admiralty, dated thence 12th July, 1845,* says, "The ships are now complete with supplies of every kind for three years, . . . and I hope to sail in the night," as "I have learnt, though the winter was severe, the spring was not later than usual, nor was the ice later in breaking away hereabout; it

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition," p. 50.

is now supposed to be loose as far as 74° N., and our prospect is favourable of getting across the barrier, and as far as Lancaster Sound, without much obstruction." He ends by speaking "of the energy and zeal of Capt. Crozier, Commander Fitzjames, and of the officers and men with whom he has the happiness of being employed. . . . We left them, says Lieut. (now Commander) Griffiths, with every species of provisions for three entire years, independently of five bullocks; they had also stores of every description for the same time, and fuel in abundance."*

The *Erebus* and *Terror* were last seen by the *Prince of Wales* whaler, Capt. Dannett, on the 26th July, 1845, moored to an iceberg in lat. $74^{\circ} 48'$ N. and long. $66^{\circ} 13'$ W., waiting a favourable opening of the middle ice to cross to Lancaster Sound. Thus departed this memorable expedition, about which so much of deep and anxious feeling and fond hope was invested at the time, and so much of melancholy interest is attached since.

We have noticed the great object of this voyage, the plan on which it was founded, the reasonableness and favourable prospect it offered for the final completion of "the Passage;" we have remarked on the means employed, the perfect equipment of the ships, and the superior efficiency of the commander and officers; we have given the Instructions, and pointed out their clearness, definite meaning, and intentions; we have noted the departure of the expedition, its long absence, and the uncertainty hanging over it; we have alluded to the continued, extended, and careful search that has been made for its recovery, and the complete failure of every effort; we have drawn attention to the particular quarter to which it was directed—and in the absence of other information have endeavoured to show, that in searching for the lost expedition we have nothing to guide us to him but the Instructions that were given to Sir John Franklin on his departure; that in seeking him, these Instructions have been departed from, or lost sight of, and hence our want of success—hence the sad mystery which envelops the fate and position of this memorable expedition. We shall now inquire if there exists no cause for this unhappy termination to our prolonged efforts; we shall examine the opinions and plans upon which the searching expeditions have been directed to act. We have long questioned their soundness, for we could never see any promise of happy result likely to arise from any opinion or plan which recommended a search in one direction for an

* See Shillinglaw's "Narrative of Arctic Discovery, 1851," p. 271.

expedition sent in another and a widely different one. We cannot comprehend the efficacy of any plan that does not include the intent of Franklin's Instructions. We have yet to understand the train of reasoning which institutes a search to the north of Barrow's Strait with the hope of recovering the Franklin Expedition, which was (on a specific and approved plan) specially directed to the south-west; much less can we comprehend why this particular (this south-west) quarter, to which it was sent, should be almost altogether neglected—or at best only partially examined. In the prosecution of our inquiries we shall notice all suggestions and plans, whether public or private, that come before us, and the searching expeditions arising out of them, their orders and their doings, whether by Barrow's or Behring's Straits, or by the Mackenzie or the Coppermine River; but our principal attention will be devoted to those by Baffin's Bay and Barrow's Strait; our immediate object being to ascertain why the south-west, from Cape Walker (Melville Sound), has been only "partially" searched, whilst the north of Barrow's Strait has obtained almost exclusive attention. We shall note, too, the various rumours and reports that have from time to time arisen—alike false and unfeeling, and specially to be denounced.

1846.—The year 1846 passed away without the betrayal of more than the ordinary anxiety which is always felt for those that are away, especially when on an enterprise, such as that of the *Erebus* and *Terror*. The general impression was that Sir John Franklin would not lightly relinquish the "great object" of the expedition, the "solution" of which was the darling feeling of his heart, for any ordinary difficulty; it was felt, too, that he was well supported by his able second, Capt. Crozier, by Fitzjames, and his other excellent officers and devoted crews. The only circumstance worthy record was a letter addressed to the Admiralty (September 16, 1846), by Sir John Ross:—"Having promised to Sir John Franklin, that, in the event of the expedition under his command being frozen (as the one I directed was for four years), I would volunteer, in the year 1847, to proceed to certain positions we had agreed upon in search of him and his brave companions." The Admiralty replied (September 30, 1846), "Your gallant and humane intentions are fully appreciated by their Lordships, yet no such service is at present contemplated." The season of 1846 seems to have been severe, as none of the whale-ships appear to have approached Lancaster Sound.

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1848," p. 53.

1847.—The first official notice we have of watch and ward over the fortunes of the Franklin Expedition emanates, as it very properly should, from the Admiralty, and seems to have originated out of several communications to their Lordships from Sir John Ross. This document is dated, Admiralty, February 19, 1847,* and is addressed to the late Sir Edward Parry. It encloses "extracts of two recent letters from Sir John Ross," and requests "the substance of any communication which Sir John Franklin may have made to" him with regard to "depôts" "for his relief (no record of such" "having been left" "here") "their Lordships being sure, that from his known intimacy," "he would have consulted him on the subject." "Their Lordships, having unlimited confidence in the skill and resources of Sir John Franklin, have as yet felt no apprehensions about his safety; but, on the other hand, it is obvious, that if no accounts of him should arrive by the end of this year, or, as Sir John Ross expects, at an earlier period, active steps must then be taken." Their Lordships then call for Sir Edward Parry's opinion on the subject, both with respect to the question of employing vessels, the period of sailing, and the several places it would be expedient to visit; as well as for any advice which may occur to "him," who has had "so much personal experience of the Arctic regions," &c., &c., and concludes, "it would be satisfactory" if you would call upon Sir James Ross, Colonel Sabine, and Sir John Richardson, to enter into consultations with you.

The two extracts are as following; the first is dated January 27, 1847:—"In reference to the several communications I have made to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, touching the probable position of the discovery ships under the command of Sir John Franklin, and in the performance of a promise I made to that gallant officer, namely, that if no accounts were received from him up to the middle of January, 1847, I would volunteer my services to ascertain his fate, and to visit the several depôts we had fixed before his departure from England.

"I beg most respectfully to state, for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that my opinion, founded on my experience in the Arctic regions, and on my knowledge of the intentions of Sir John Franklin, is, in the first place, that he cannot have succeeded in passing through Behring's Straits; because the expedition, had it been successful, would have been heard of before the

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1846," p. 21.

middle of this month; and, in the second place, the probability is, that his ships have been carried by drift ice into a position from which they cannot be extricated."

The second, dated February 9, 1847 :—"In reference to the communication I had the honour of making to you this morning, when I pointed out the impossibility of Sir John Franklin and his crew being able to reach the nearest place a whaling-ship could be found, from the position in which the expedition must be frozen up, consequent on the known intentions of Sir John Franklin, namely, to put his ships into the drift ice at the western end of Melville Island; a risk which was deemed in the highest degree imprudent by Lieut. Parry and the officers of the expedition of 1819-20, with ships of a less draught of water, and in every respect better calculated to sustain the pressure of the ice, and other dangers to which they must be exposed; and as it is now evident that the expedition cannot have succeeded in passing Behring's Strait, and, if not totally lost, must have been carried by the ice that is known to drift to the southward, on land seen at a great distance in that direction, and from which the accumulation of ice behind them will, as in my own case, for ever prevent the return of the ships; consequently they must be abandoned either on the 1st of May next, in order to reach Melville Island before the snow melts at the end of June, and where they must remain until the 1st of August, and at which place I had selected to leave a dépôt of provisions, absolutely necessary for their sustenance; or if they defer their journey until the 1st of May, 1848, it will be still more necessary that provisions, fuel, &c., should be deposited there, after I had secured my vessel in a harbour on the south side of Barrow's Strait, and in such a position as would enable them to reach her when the sea was sufficiently open for boats, which I would leave at the dépôt in 'Winter Harbour,' while in the meantime I would survey the west coast of Boothia, and in all probability decide the question of a North-West Passage. I was officially acquainted by Captain Hamilton that it was the intention of their Lordships not to accede to my proposals, but to offer a reward to whalers and to the Hudson's Bay Company, to use their 'endeavours' for the rescue of Sir John Franklin and his companions, a proposition I hereby protest against as utterly inefficient; for as one of the officers of Parry's expedition, who was then of opinion that what Sir John Franklin intended to do was imprudent, and who from experience knew with what extreme difficulty we travelled 800 miles over much smoother ice after we abandoned our vessel, and must be certain

that Franklin and his men, 138 in number, could not possibly travel 600 miles, while we had in prospect the *Fury's* stores to sustain us after our arrival, besides boats; and unless I reach Melville Island next summer, they will have nothing."

We have deemed it better to give these extracts in full, fearful of destroying the sense of them by abridgment. It will be impossible, within our circumscribed limits, to award the same justice to the distinguished men whose opinions are sought, but we will endeavour faithfully to give the sense of their replies: even this would be scarcely necessary, were it not that new opinions have arisen, opinions so opposed and inconsistent with the tenor of Franklin's Instructions; the latter have been so perverted or disregarded as almost to lead to the conclusion that the whole plan was one great phantom of the brain, one unmingled incomprehensibility, never intended to be understood, much less carried out. Our object here and elsewhere will be to show that the plan had a reasonable and fixed object, and a definite direction; as will be seen in the replies given by Parry, James Ross, Sabine, and Richardson. But how their Lordships could have imagined that the two extracts were capable of reply at all, we cannot conceive; we can only account for their being referred over to these gentlemen to save themselves a useless labour, and with the hope that they might be able to elicit a meaning from them which they themselves were unable to detect; at any rate, these replies go to show that Franklin was to be sought for in a south-west direction from Cape Walker.

We ought to remark here, our extracts or quotations from these replies will be confined, as nearly as possible, to the direction which they take, the several places "which it would be expedient to visit" involved in this, and also the object we have ourselves in view in writing these pages; namely, to inquire whether we have sought the Franklin Expedition in the right direction?

Sir Edward Parry replies, 23rd Feb., 1847.* He says:—"As to depôts, he has no recollection whatever of any such communication from Sir John Franklin. The conclusions of their Lordships, as to the absence of any present cause for apprehension, exactly coincide with his own. Former experience has clearly shown that, with resources, two winters may be passed in the Polar Regions, not only in safety, but with comfort. The absence of intelligence is rather in favour than otherwise of the success which has attended

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1846," pp. 23—28.

their efforts, but conceives that the time has arrived when due preparations should be made for an active search, in case no information should be received in the autumn of the year." As to the measures to be pursued, "nothing short of a second well equipped expedition could be expected to do more than penetrate through Barrow's Strait, which may be considered as the mere threshold of the enterprise in which the *Erebus* and *Terror* are engaged. The only plan which appears to hold out a reasonable prospect of success is to push supplies to the northern coast of the American continent and the islands adjacent thereto, with the assistance of the Hudson's Bay Company," and refers to the experience of Sir John Richardson for all matters of detail. "In conclusion, it might be satisfactory to adopt (as suggested by Sir John Barrow) the only remaining mode of obtaining information,—to direct the commander-in-chief in the Pacific to send a small vessel into Behring's Strait, and, if practicable, to despatch a boat along the shore of the American continent to the eastward, in the manner pursued by Capt. Beechey in the *Blossom*."

Sir John Richardson, 25th Feb. 1847, says:—"I had many conversations with Sir John Franklin up to the eve of his departure, and also a communication written on the coast of Greenland, and never heard him express a wish or expectation of depôts of provisions being stored at Melville Island or elsewhere. He would have preferred such a request to the Government alone."

"Sir John Franklin's plans were to shape his course, in the first instance, to Cape Walker, and to push to the westward in that parallel; or if that could not be accomplished, to make his way southwards to the channel discovered on the north coast of the continent, and so on to Behring's Strait; failing success in that quarter, he meant to retrace his course to Wellington Sound (Channel), and attempt a passage northwards of the Parry Islands; and if foiled there also, to descend Regent's Inlet, and seek a passage along the coast discovered by Dease and Simpson. With respect to the very strong apprehensions for the safety of the expedition," he thinks "they are premature; the ships being equipped to pass two winters in the Arctic Sea, and until next November shall have passed without tidings of them, no well grounded cause for more anxiety than was naturally felt when the expedition sailed; but the case will be very different if next winter sets in without satisfactory intelligence of their safety." He thinks "precautionary steps advisable; concurs in a well-appointed expedition of two strong ships, to trace the course of the missing vessels, and encouraging

the whalers by an adequate reward to examine the shores of Lancaster Strait and Wellington Sound. The boat party which sailed from Hudson's Bay last summer for the Welcome and bottom of Regent's Inlet will procure intelligence of the ships, should they have gone down Regent's Inlet." Sir John Richardson adds:—"There remains the contingency of the ships having penetrated some considerable distance to the south-west of Cape Walker, and having been hampered and crushed in the narrow channels of the Archipelago," believed to occupy "the space between Victoria, Wollaston, and Banks' Lands. Such accidents among ice are seldom so sudden but that the boats of one or both ships with provisions can be saved; and in such an event the survivors would either return to Lancaster Strait, or make for the continent, according to their nearness. Sir John Franklin being fully aware of the parts of the continent where they may expect relief, we may expect intelligence of the crews having reached a post of the Hudson's Bay Company to arrive in June or July next, to obtain tidings of the ships. Wollaston and Victoria Lands and the neighbouring islands might be visited by boats, but this cannot be effected earlier than August, 1848." Sir John Richardson proposes a boat expedition, entering into all the details of number, size, manning and provisioning, period of departure, wintering place, &c., and adds:—"Should the season be favourable, the boats would arrive in the Mackenzie by the end of July, and at its mouth in four days afterwards; time enough to examine a considerable portion of the coast, or even in a fine autumn to run down Wollaston Land, and return to winter quarters by way of the Coppermine River, thus searching the whole line of coast to which a shipwrecked crew would make their way. The winter residence ought to be at the north end of Great Bear Lake, as from that locality the channels between Wollaston and Victoria Lands could be most easily explored in the summer (1849)." He concludes by adding, "he would cheerfully conduct it himself."

The Admiralty, the 2nd March, 1847, in a letter to Sir John Pelly, Bart., says:—"Being engaged in collecting the best practical opinions as to the measures to be adopted towards obtaining tidings of Sir John Franklin, have now before them letters from Sir Edward Parry and Sir John Richardson, from the last of which my Lords beg to send extracts, and would wish to be favoured with any observations he might have to offer, and to be informed of the nature of the instructions" already issued to the servants of the Hudson's Bay

Company, with the view of obtaining intelligence of Sir John Franklin.*

Sir John Pelly replies, 4th March, 1847:†—"I think it will be better if I defer offering my opinion until I shall have had an opportunity of conferring with Sir George Simpson." He encloses the extract of a despatch forwarded to the Governor and Council of Rupert's Land, dated 11th March, 1845, as follows:—

"The subject of Arctic discovery again engages the attention, not only of the Government, but of the people, and Sir John Franklin is about to proceed in command of an expedition, with a view of effecting a passage by sea round the northern shore of the American continent. To that end he proposes going up Davis' Strait into Baffin's Bay, through Lancaster Sound, Barrow's Strait, and inside Melville Island on to Point Barrow." The rest relates to the Company's servants, and through them the natives, "to be on the look out for the expedition," &c. Here the route intended by Franklin is laid down so clearly, that it is impossible to mistake it. It tells one not only the impression of the Hudson's Bay Company, but also that of the Admiralty in 1847, or why have applied to the Company at all, if their territories had not been in his (Franklin's) route, *i.e.*, to the south-west, and *not to the north of Barrow's Strait?*

Sir George Simpson reports, Hudson's Bay House, 22nd March, 1847:‡—"After a very attentive examination of the whole subject, I cannot suggest any amendment of Sir John Richardson's plan."

Sir James C. Ross's reply is dated 2nd March, 1847:§—"I do not think there is the smallest reason of apprehension or anxiety for the safety or success of the expedition. No one would have expected they would have been able to get through to Behring's Strait without spending at least two winters. Except under unusually favourable circumstances,—which all accounts from the whalers concur in proving they have not experienced,—neither Sir John Franklin nor Capt. Crozier expected to do so. Their last letters to me inform me they had provisions for three years on full allowance, which they could extend to four without inconvenience, so that we may feel assured they cannot want from that cause until after the middle of July, 1849. It therefore does not appear to me desirable to send after them until the spring of next year. With reference to depôts of

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1848," p. 53.

† *Ibid.*, p. 36.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

provisions, I can very confidently assert that no expectation of the kind was seriously entertained by him. Capt. Crozier was staying with me at Blackheath nearly all the time the expedition was fitting out, and with Sir John Franklin I was in almost daily and unreserved communication respecting the details of the equipment and future proceedings of the expedition, and neither of them made the least allusion to any such arrangements or expectations beyond mentioning, as an *absurdity*, what Sir John Ross had *proposed* to Sir John Franklin." He adds:—"If no account should arrive before the end of this year, it would be proper to send to their assistance; two such ships as the *Erebus* and *Terror* should be sent. They should sail early in May, 1848, and follow the route that Sir John Franklin was directed to pursue, or that might appear to the commander more likely for him to take, after passing beyond the limits of our knowledge of those regions." He concludes:—"The present year the Hudson's Bay Company should be required to send out instructions for a supply of provisions to be in readiness at the more northern stations, and direct such other arrangements as likely to facilitate Sir John Franklin and his people's homeward journey, as they would assuredly endeavour to make their way to the Hudson's Bay Company's settlements, if their ships should be so injured as to prevent their proceeding, or so entangled in the ice as to preclude every hope of escape in any part of the Polar Seas westward of Melville Island, as the shortest and safest route they could pursue."

Colonel Sabine's reply is dated March 5, 1847:—

1st, "I never heard Sir John Franklin express either wishes or expectations that deposits of provisions should be made at particular points for his relief."

2nd, In a letter received from Sir John Franklin from the Whale-fish Islands, dated July 9, 1845, after noticing "what they had received from the transport," the *Erebus* and *Terror* had on board provisions, &c., &c., for three years complete from that date (*i. e.*, to July, 1848), he adds as follows:—"I hope my dear wife and daughters will not be over anxious if we should not return by the time they have fixed upon; . . . you know well, that even with the second winter, without success in our object, we should wish to try some other channel, if the state of our provisions and the health of the crews justify it."

"If, therefore," continues Colonel Sabine, "the crews have preserved their health as other crews have done under similar circumstances, and if no accident has befallen, we should consider the expe-

dition, according to the last known intention of its commander," is "still engaged in the prosecution of the North-West Passage, and that for some months yet to come their views will not be directed to a return to England by any other route than by that of Behring's Strait. It is quite possible, . . . Sir John Franklin may even be detained a third winter in the Polar Sea: should he not return in the autumn of 1847 it will by no means be to be inferred that some misfortune must have taken place."

3rd, "If the month of November, 1847, should pass without tidings of the expedition, measures of a decisive character should be taken . . . the following summer; . . . it would be proper to have regard to both extremities of the passage—to Behring's Strait as well as to Baffin's Bay."

4th, "With respect to Behring's Strait both sides of the strait should be watched, as, should the ships have succeeded in getting into the open sea *discovered by Wrangell*, they might be as likely to come down on the Asiatic as on the American side of the strait. If obliged to abandon the ships" in the "summer of 1848, between Melville Island and Behring's Strait, the boats must be looked for on the American side."

5th, "With respect to Baffin's Bay . . . I presume it would be proper to employ two vessels, . . . fitted for ice navigation, . . . with at least two years' provisions."

6th, "It was Sir John Franklin's intention, if foiled at one point, to try in succession all the probable openings into a more navigable part of the Polar Sea. . . . The range of coast is considerable in which memorials . . . would have to be sought for, extending from Melville Island in the west to the great sound at the head of Baffin's Bay in the east. As the sea in the upper parts of Baffin's Bay and in Barrow's Strait is in general comparatively free from ice during the summer months, it seems desirable to call in the aid of steam to ensure every accessible part of the coast referred to being visited in the one season. . . . The east and west sides of Wellington Channel should be especially searched for notices, . . . and one of the *ports* in the vicinity might be made one of the . . . stations for a *dépôt* ship, being central . . . to Barrow's Strait, Wellington Channel, and Melville Island."

In quoting these replies our first desire is to show that the original plan of the voyage, which was to settle the much vexed question of a passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific, was definite and understood by the majority, with one exception. Sir Edward Parry looks to the

south-west, to the American continent, he does not even mention Wellington Channel. Sir John Richardson expressly tells us Franklin's plans, from about Cape Walker, west and south, "to the channel . . . on the north coast of the continent, and so on to Behring's Strait; . . . all that follows is merely secondary to this. Surely this is clear enough for the advocates of the Wellington Channel route; but did Franklin fail of success in getting west and south? South we now know he could not get, but it was not known then; still he might have obtained large westing. Sir John Richardson, in proposing a plan for search, like Sir Edward Parry, looks only to the American continent, but Lancaster Strait and Wellington Sound he would leave to the whalers, these being only subsidiary to the primary object. Sir James Ross clearly shows us, that he looks to the American continent, by recommending "the route Sir John Franklin was directed to pursue, and by referring to the Hudson's Bay Company for provisions" to facilitate Sir John Franklin and his people's homeward journey "through their territories, should any calamity have befallen their ships in any part of the Polar Sea westward of the extreme point of Melville Island." He thus shows that he thought it probable Franklin had made large westing—rather premature. One thing is pleasing, there is no reference to the north *via* Wellington Channel.

Colonel (now Major-General) Sabine's* views, unlike his colleagues', appear to us to take too extended a range. Let us repeat: both extremities of the passage—Behring's Strait and Baffin's Bay—Behring's Strait itself, and both sides of that strait, as Franklin may have succeeded in getting into the sea of Wrangell; the American coast between Melville Island and Behring's Strait, all the probable openings into the Polar Sea, and the range of coast "extending from Melville Island in the west to the great Sound at the head of Baffin's Bay in the east," and the east and west sides of Wellington Channel. This is rather a wide range, and yet it is to be done in "one season." Now we have great respect for this talented officer, but we cannot help thinking he has "o'erleaped himself." The examination of all these passages, channels, sounds, and coasts "in one season," is impracticable; and would be so even though the whole British navy were employed in this service; and yet to record it! Amidst all this wide range, the fifth section of Franklin's Instructions, directing him to a given point and in a given direction, is altogether unnoticed.

* The translator of Wrangell's "Polar Sea," 1820-3.

Franklin's intentions are mentioned, and yet his Instructions are forgotten. How is this to be accounted for? Why leave that which we know to go in quest of that which we know not of? For ourselves, we think the field for hopeful search is wide enough without extending it beyond the bounds of probability. As to searching the "great Sound at the head of Baffin's Bay," we should as soon have thought of examining the shores of Spitzbergen; but the tendencies here shown are all with the mysterious north. Major-General Sabine was with Parry on his unprecedented and successful voyage in 1819-20; the Parry Islands are part of himself; and the Wellington Channel, that "fair straight," he looks on with an old fondness; thoughts on a Polar Sea are his solace, especially if he can get at it and extract, for useful purposes, its hidden meteorology and its mystic magnetism; he would leave no element of our earth sacred, secret, or idle;—so far we rejoice in and with him, but let us not distract that which is clear, by multiplying imaginary probabilities, so that at last, forgetting the only light we have to guide us, we wander lost in the bewildering mazes of uncertainty. In the case before us, "To Cape Walker and the south-west!" should have been our watchword; there lies our only true path to Franklin.

Before leaving the "*Extracts*" we would remark, their Lordships at the Admiralty cannot have selected them for the facts they contain, or the clearness of the views they express; they seem rather to have been chosen and used as an instrument for the attainment of other objects than for any merit they possess: their letter to Sir Edward Parry clearly shows this; for while they desire information as to what were Sir John Franklin's expectations regarding depôts, they state their convictions as to the present safety of the expedition, and they call for opinions as to the best measures to be taken with the view of affording relief if necessary. The fact seems to have been with their Lordships as with others, they could not comprehend the drift of Sir John Ross's letters, excepting his desire to be employed. They wished to escape the invidious alternative of rejecting them altogether, which they ought to have done; they therefore refer them to Sir Edward Parry and his distinguished Arctic contemporaries, to find a meaning in them if they could—in short, mildly to shelve them. Still we think, if extracts were given at all, those given should have comprehended the entire views (if possible) of Sir John Ross.*

* See "Rear-Admiral Sir John Franklin: a Narrative," by Sir John Ross.—
"Magna est veritas, et prævalchit."

We will now give a non-official opinion of these extracts; an opinion which we have little doubt was entertained quite as much at the Admiralty, and by those to whom the extracts were referred, as by ourselves, but from professional delicacy not expressed.

Extract 1—Hints at a probable position for Franklin's ships, but it is not given. Then comes an alleged promise made to Franklin, "that if no accounts were received from him up to the middle of January, 1847, he (Sir John Ross) would volunteer . . . to ascertain his fate, and to visit the several depôts we had fixed before his departure." To go in what direction?—to depôts where fixed? If this *promise was made*, if *depôts were fixed* upon, how is it no one knew anything about it? The Admiralty ought to have been made aware of it: we regret, but we must reject this tale. Sir John Ross then gives an "opinion . . . founded on" his "experience in the Arctic regions," and his "knowledge of the intentions of Sir John Franklin." He tells us first a fact we knew; that the expedition "cannot have passed Behring's Strait, . . . or we should have heard of it;" and, secondly, without assigning any reason, adds, "the probability is that his ships have been carried by drift ice into a position from which they cannot be extricated." What profound nonsense!

Extract 2—Asserts that Franklin's "known intentions" were "to put his ships into the drift ice at the western end of Melville Island." This, if not positively false, leads to another conclusion; that Franklin never intended to follow his Instructions, for they (Section 6) expressly caution him against that quarter. This is equally improbable. But according to Sir John Ross, there he is, "and if not totally lost, must have been carried by the ice that is known to drift to the southward, . . . on land seen at a great distance in that direction; the ships, consequently, . . . must be abandoned." How rational is this cheering conclusion! The ships are assumed to be in a position where they are cautioned *not* to go; they are carried down upon a land no one had ever seen since the time of Parry, 1819-20, "by the wind, for there was no current." * Such are the strange visions Sir John Ross sees, and which he would have the Admiralty to believe are realities! He then talks of securing his vessel "in a harbour on the south (-west?) † side of Barrow's Strait, . . . and in such a position as would enable them (Franklin and his people) to

* See his Letter, "Journal, Royal Geographical Society," vol. vi., part i., p. 49.

† See "Sir John Franklin: a Narrative," by Sir John Ross, p. 17.

reach her" when the sea "was open" for "boats which" he "would leave at the dépôt in Winter Harbour. . . . In the meantime" he "would survey the west coast of Boothia, and in all probability decide the question of a North-West Passage:"—so then it seems Sir John Ross purposes going to Melville Island, return to some harbour on the south side of Barrow's Strait, survey the unknown west coast of Boothia, and find the North-West Passage—in how long a time? From these extracts it will be seen, even at the very outset, what a mist of words clouds the ideas of Sir John Ross, in advising the future search for the Franklin Expedition.

CHAPTER IV.

REWARDS FOR DISCOVERY OF RECORDS OR TRACES OF FRANKLIN'S
EXPEDITION—ADMIRAL BEECHY'S PLAN—DR. M'CORMICK'S—
NOTES, FITZJAMES—MEMORANDUM OF SIR JOHN BARROW—SIR
J. C. ROSS' PLAN OF RELIEF BY LANCASTER SOUND—J. C. ROSS'
PLAN BY BEHRING'S STRAIT—NOTES, FITZJAMES.

VARIOUS letters from the Admiralty, dated 6th to the 13th of March, 1847,* to the Commissioners of Customs, offered rewards to the masters and crews of whalers visiting Lancaster Sound, and those "who may succeed in obtaining any information or record of the progress of the *Erebus* and *Terror* through Lancaster Sound, and to the westward." One of these letters, dated Admiralty, March 10, 1847, is worthy quotation, as it embodies the views contained in Col. Sabine's letter (see page 59) for extending the line of search for "memorials of the ships' progress" from "Melville Island in the west to the great Sound at the head of Baffin's Bay in the east:"—"My Lords are desirous that this supposition as to Sir John Franklin's probable proceedings should be made known to the masters of the several whalers." The notice of this supposition at this preliminary stage of the search we observe with regret, as the whole is founded on Franklin's privately communicated general impressions and conversations. Again, it assumes him to have been "foiled" in the west. There is, therefore, a premature importance attached to these "intentions," which, in effect, clouds and draws attention from the plain tenor of his Instructions. We fear in the end it may work ill.

Capt. (the late Admiral) Beechey now (April 28, 1847)† submitted a plan of relief, the leading features of which may be thus given:—"There does not at present appear to be any reasonable apprehension for the safety of the expedition. At the same time it would be prudent to despatch a vessel to Barrow's Strait this season. . . . If one vessel (a whaler) cannot be engaged to execute this, . . . there seems to be nothing left but to equip an expedition, and start it off as soon as it can be got ready. . . . This expedition should make its way to Barrow's Strait, and closely navigating the

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition," pp. 54-5.

† *Ibid.*, p. 30.

southern shore, gain Cape Walker as *“speedily as possible, as I think this is a place where information of an important nature is likely to be found; from this vicinity one vessel may proceed to examine the various points and headlands in Regent’s Inlet, and also those to the northward, while the other watches the passage, that the expedition may not pass unseen, should it be on its return. The season ended, the ships may repair to Port Bowen, or any other port in the vicinity of Leopold Island, to winter. . . In the spring of 1848 a party should . . explore the coast down to Hecla and Fury Strait, . . to communicate with the party despatched by the Hudson’s Bay Company in that direction.* . . It would render the plan complete if a boat could be despatched down Back’s River to range the coast eastward of its mouth to meet the above-mentioned party; and thus . . complete the geography of that part of the American coast,”* and *“it would complete the line of information as to the measures of relief . . set on foot. . . This part of the plan has suggested itself to me from a conversation I had with Sir John Franklin as to his first effort being made to the westward and south-westward of Cape Walker. It is possible, that after passing that cape he may have been successful in getting down upon Victoria Land, and have passed his first winter (1845) thereabout, and that he may have spent his second winter at a still more advanced station, and even endured a third, without either a prospect of success, or of an extrication of his vessels. . . If in this condition . . Sir John Franklin should resolve upon taking to his boats, he would prefer attempting a boat navigation through Sir James Ross’ Strait, and up Regent Inlet, to a long land journey across the continent to the Hudson’s Bay settlements, to which the greater part of his crew would be wholly unequal. . . The season of 1848 would be passed in watching the strait on both sides. . . The season of 1849 will be one of painful anxiety, but it will be imperative for the vessels to come away at such a period . . as will render their return to England certain.”* Capt. Beechey then refers to the west side of the American continent. *“There does not appear to be any necessity whatever for sending a vessel to Behring’s Strait until 1848; for, in the event of Sir John Franklin reaching the Pacific before that period it will assuredly not be in his boats, but with his ships in an efficient condition. But in 1848, . . Icy Cape” should be visited, and “Point Barrow,” &c., “to as distant a point beyond” as “practicable.”* We omit further details on the west side, observing only

* Dr. Rae’s expedition to explore the bottom of Prince Regent’s Inlet, 1846-7.

it is in the general direction of Franklin's Instructions, and that every observation, considering the time in which this plan was written and submitted (1847), is marked by the usual soundness of that talented and judicious officer; but we must confess we do not see clearly his object in visiting Fury and Hecla Strait, or the motive for a boat party down Back's River; Sir John Franklin was directed to the south-west from Cape Walker, and we had no information to prove he was unable to fulfil his Instructions; we think *Cape Walker* at this time the great object to reach.

This plan of the late Admiral Beechey's was submitted to Sir John Richardson, and he, in a reply dated the 5th of May, 1847,* after various observations connected with fitting out the expedition to Barrow's Strait, says:—"With respect to a party to be sent down Back's River to the bottom of Regent's Inlet, . . it could scarcely be organized to start this summer;" and gives, as his reason "the scarcity of provisions in the Hudson's Bay country," and "moreover, there is no Company's post on the line of Back's River nearer than the junction of Slave River with Great Slave Lake; and I do not think, under any circumstances, Sir John Franklin would attempt that route. . . . In the summer of 1849, if the resources of my party . . . remain unimpaired, . . . much of what Captain Beechey suggests in regard to exploring Victoria Land may be done by it, and indeed forms part of the original scheme. . . . Were Sir John Franklin thrown upon the north coast of the continent with his boats and all his crew, I do not think he would attempt the ascent of any river but the Mackenzie." He concludes:—"A vessel meeting the *Erebus* and *Terror* in Behring's Strait this season might render great service." It is well to notice these observations of Sir John Richardson's; they are the result of sound thought, and clearly show that he does not look for the Franklin Expedition in the direction of Back's River, but to the Mackenzie, *i.e.*, to the *south-west of Cape Walker*.

Dr. McCormick, R.N.,† 20th of May, 1847, submitted the outline of a plan of search for Sir John Franklin by the way of the Coppermine:‡ "If Sir John Franklin, guided by his instructions, has passed through Barrow's Strait, and shaped a south-westerly course

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition," pp. 32-3.

† This active, meritorious officer served with Sir Edward Parry in his attempt to reach the North Pole in 1827; was in the Antarctic Expedition, under the command of Sir James Ross, from 1839 to 1843; commanded a boat expedition up Wellington Channel, 1852, &c. He has been 32 years in the Royal Navy.

‡ Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 125.

from the meridian of Cape Walker, with the intention of gaining the northern coast of America, and so passing through Dolphin and Union Straits, along the shore of that continent, to Behring's Straits, his great risk of detention in the ice throughout this course would be found between the parallels of 74° and 60° N., and the meridians of 100° and 110° W." "Should the *Erebus* and *Terror* have been beset in the heavy ice, or wrecked amongst it and the broken land which in all probability exists there, whilst contending with the prevalent westerly winds in this quarter, the Coppermine River would decidedly offer the most direct route and nearest approach to that portion of the Polar Sea. . . . After crossing Coronation Gulf and Dease's Strait to" Victoria Land, "from this point a careful search should be commenced in the direction of Banks' Land, the intervening space between it and Victoria Land occupying about 5 degrees, or little more than 300 miles."

The above plan we insert with pleasure, inasmuch as it shows that Franklin's Instructions were understood, and the direction that expedition would take. The north is not mentioned, and with reason; Franklin was sent to the south-west, and in that direction all reasonable hope rested.

The following is an extract of a private letter, communicated by John Barrow, Esq.,* dated Admiralty, 8th June, 1847. "Extract of private letter from Captain Fitzjames, dated January, 1845:"—"It does not appear clear to me what led Parry down Prince Regent's Inlet, after having got as far as Melville Island before." "The North-West Passage is certainly to be gone through by Barrow's Strait, but whether south or north of the Parry Group remains to be proved. I am for going north, edging north-west, till in longitude 140° , if possible." Mr. Barrow appends to this extract this memorandum:—"Captain Fitzjames was much inclined upon trying for the 'Passage' to the northward of the Parry Islands, and he would no doubt endeavour to persuade Sir John Franklin to pursue the course mentioned, *if they failed to the southward*. This should be borne in mind in sending any searching expedition next year through Baffin's Bay and Lancaster Sound." This extract and memorandum are interesting; they show that, however talked about, no attempt would be made by the north unless all had failed to the south-west.

We shall now give extracts from a memorandum (July, 1847)†

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1846," p. 71.

† *Ibid.*, p. 72.

from Sir John Barrow, Bart., founder of the plan for the solution of the Great Question:—"The anxiety that prevails regarding Sir John Franklin and the brave fellows who compose the crews of the two ships is very natural, but somewhat premature; it arises chiefly from nothing having been received from them since fixed in the ice in Baffin's Bay in 1845, . . . opposite to the opening into Lancaster Sound. Hitherto no difficulty has been found to the entrance into that Sound. If disappointed, rather than return to the southward to winter . . . at or about Disco, . . . I should think that they would endeavour to enter Smith's Sound, so highly spoken of by Baffin. . . . From Lancaster Sound, Franklin's Instructions directed him to proceed through Barrow's Strait, as far as the islands on its southern side extended, which is short of Melville Island, which was to be avoided, not only on account of its dangerous coast, but also as being out of the direction of the course to the intended object. Having, therefore, reached the last known land on the southern side of Barrow's Strait, they were to shape a course direct to Behring's Strait, without any deviation, except what obstruction might be met with from ice or from islands, . . . of which no knowledge had at that time been procured; but if such existed, it would be left to their judgment, on the spot, how to get rid of such obstructions, by taking a northerly or a southerly course. One thing is certain; they did not get through Behring's Straits last season, and if in the present one, it should" be "February or March before we could hear of it. There is not, therefore, any occasion yet to be anxious about their safety, but if nothing be heard of them in the course of these two months, the Admiralty will, no doubt, take measures for every possible inquiry to be made into their fate. . . . But how or where to direct inquiry is the difficulty:—if they pursued their instructions, the coasts of the Polar Sea and its two entrances are the most obvious points to be examined." "Lord Auckland consulted Sir Edward Parry and myself on the subject: our opinion was, that the first step was that of a vessel to pass the two entrances of the Polar Sea, in order to ascertain from the Esquimaux or Indians if they had seen or heard of any such vessels; and if so, how, when, and where? . . . On the coast of North America I should consider any inquiry unnecessary; the Hudson's Bay Company have their stations so little removed from the sea-coast, and have so much intercourse with the Indians and Esquimaux; and besides, Sir John Franklin must have had such a *painful recollection* of that coast, as to avoid it in the first instance, and if forced on it, to lose no time in quitting it. . . . The northern coast of

the Polar Sea is also inhabited, even Siberia; and I am almost certain, if they happen to be there, the Russian Government would know it, and be anxious to communicate that knowledge to England. . . . The only chance of bringing them upon this coast is the possibility of some obstruction having tempted them to explore an immense inlet on the northern shore of Barrow's Strait (short of Melville Island), called Wellington Channel, which Parry felt an inclination to explore; and more than one of the present party betrayed to me a similar inclination, which I discouraged, no one venturing to conjecture even to what extent it might go, or into what difficulties it might lead. . . . Under all these circumstances, it would be an act of folly to pronounce any opinion of the state, condition, or position of those two ships. They are well suited for their purpose; and the only doubt I have is that of their being hampered by the screws among the ice."

Sir John Barrow in this memorandum seems desirous to relieve anxiety by briefly unfolding the whole plan on which the expedition was directed to proceed, viz., to the south-west. He recommends inquiry from the east by Barrow's Strait to *follow* the expedition, and by the west—Behring's Strait—to *meet* it. For intelligence from the American coast he looks to the Hudson's Bay Company, through their intercourse with the natives. He refers to Siberia and the Wellington Channel, but *only* in case of obstruction to the west, and the ships, having taken advantage of it, had fallen on Siberia. It seems, he discouraged any inclination in Franklin's officers to explore it, as no one could say to what extent it might go up—to what difficulties lead. This memorandum *clearly points to the south-west and not to the north*; and it is worthy of particular notice, that though intelligence of the expedition is wanting, still he fixes his confidence on that quarter alone. Now here is the opinion of the distinguished projector of the voyage, an opinion surely entitled to respect, and he emphatically discourages all attempts by the Wellington Channel. We are glad to be enabled to record this.

Sir James Ross, 8th November, 1847,* in a letter to the Admiralty, volunteered his services to command any expedition sent to the relief of Sir John Franklin. Their Lordships, in reply, accept them, and state, "It is the intention of the Board to appoint you to the command of an expedition, to be shortly fitted for Baffin's Bay."

The whalers this year, 1847,† appear to have reached the western

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1848," p. 74.

† *Ibid.*, p. 62.

water, but not farther west in Lancaster Sound than Navy Board Inlet. The preceding winter is represented as having been mild.

December 2, 1847.—Sir James Ross submitted to the Admiralty the “outline of a plan for affording relief to the Franklin Expedition by the way of Lancaster Sound.”* From this we extract:—“As vessels destined to follow the track of the expedition must necessarily encounter the same difficulties, . . . it is desirable that two ships be purchased for this service;”—the class of ship, equipment, boats, &c., are then noticed. . . . They should sail at the end of April next (1848), and proceed to Lancaster Sound, . . . searching both shores of that extensive inlet and of Barrow’s Strait, and then progress to the westward. . . . Wellington Channel should next be examined, and the coast between Cape Clarence and Cape Walker explored. . . . As this coast has generally been found encumbered with ice, it is not desirable that both ships should proceed so far along it as to hazard their getting shut up for the winter; but finding a convenient harbour near Garnier Bay or Cape Rennell, it would be a good position in which to secure one of the ships for the winter. . . . From this position the coast line might be explored as far as it extends to the westward, . . . as well as the western coast of Boothia, a considerable distance to the southward; . . . and, at a more advanced period of the season, the whole distance to Cape Nicholai might be completed. . . . A second party might be sent to the south-west; . . . and a third party to the north-west, or in any other direction deemed advisable at the time. . . . The easternmost vessel safely secured, the other ship should proceed alone to the westward, and endeavour to reach Winter Harbour in Melville Island, or some convenient port in Banks’ Land. . . . From this point, also, parties should be despatched early in the spring. . . . The first should be directed to trace the western coast of Banks’ Land, and proceeding to Cape Bathurst or other conspicuous point, . . . previously agreed on with Sir John Richardson, reach the Hudson’s Bay Company’s settlements or Peel River in time to return with their people to their principal establishment, and thence to England. . . . The second party should explore the eastern shore of Banks’ Land, and, making for Cape Krusenstern, communicate with Sir John Richardson’s party” about “the Coppermine River, and either assist him in completing the examination of Wollaston and Victoria Lands, or return to England. . . . These two parties would pass over that space in which most probably the ships had become involved (if at all), and would therefore

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, “Arctic Expedition, 1848,” p. 29.

have the best chance of communicating with Sir John Franklin." This arrangement was subsequently agreed to by Sir John Richardson.

In reading this "plan," it will be noticed, the "western coast of Boothia, at a considerable distance," and even "Cape Nicholai," are specified for a first party; and yet the services of the second party are thus lightly disposed of—it "*might be sent to the south-west,*" and "a third to the north-west (why?) or any other direction." We can easily understand that every plan should embrace all the points of probability; but it is past our comprehension why the primary points of Sir John Franklin's Instructions are thus lightly passed over, while to the secondary are given a speciality altogether above their value. It is true our ideas are subsequently called back to the first and proper points for search,—the eastern shore of Banks' Land, part of that space on which the original plan was founded and pointed out to Sir John Franklin "as affording the best prospect of accomplishing the passage to the Pacific," yet it is passing strange that greater importance is not given to the whole space offering such "best prospect;" *i. e., from Cape Walker west and south to Banks' Land*: surely this demanded first attention. If Franklin had passed south to the eastward of Cape Walker, we should have found some notice of such fact at the entrances of the channel, out of Barrow's Strait, which he adopted (suppose between the Capes Bunny and Walker); and having examined these, and found no traces of the expedition, there existed no necessity for the prolonged southerly search to Cape Nicholai. Cape Walker should have been gained "as speedily as possible."* One ship is to proceed to Winter Harbour, Melville Island, or a port in Banks' Land (upon which the southerly drift sets the ice (?))† and from thence a party is "to trace the western coast of Banks' Land." Why? We can understand a search to the *south-west*, between Victoria and Wollaston Lands, and the latter and Banks' Land; but here we are at a loss. How did he get there?—by the north? certainly not by the south-west. At any rate, Franklin is thus assumed to have *gained large westing*. To our rude notions it had been better, while all the headlands were examined in the progress west, to have directed special attention to Cape Walker and the south-west, and thus have been assured as we went along. But in this plan extremes are proposed. The Franklin Expedition has either made no westing, or large westing. Why not have followed the directions laid down for his guidance?

* See the late Admiral Beechey's plan, *ante*.

† See the late Sir John Ross's Letter, *ante*, February 9, 1847.

Sir James C. Ross about this time submitted (without date) the "outline of a plan" for affording relief "by the way of Behring's Strait."* After various preliminary remarks regarding equipment, &c., he says, "the vessel should sail in January, 1848." The ships should arrive in Behring's Strait about the 1st of July, 1848, and proceed along the American coast as far as possible; "two boats" should "proceed along the coast in search of the voyagers, and to communicate, if possible, with the party under Sir John Richardson;" and, "with the assistance of the natives," extensive excursions might be made early in the spring by small parties from the *Plover*, in every desirable direction; "and," as soon as the water "formed . . . boat expeditions . . . towards the Mackenzie River again to communicate . . . with Sir John Richardson's party. . . Parties of Esquimaux might be induced to travel throughout the winter, and thus keep up a communication along the American coast line." It will be seen, in this extensive line of operations, the absorbing thought is, that the Franklin Expedition would emerge to the south-west of Cape Walker. The myth of the north, the Wellington Channel, however spoken of as a point for search, is treated only subordinately to this thought. Would that it had ever continued so; the south and west would then have been entirely explored, and poor Franklin and his hapless companions had probably been restored to us.

We cannot forbear to notice in this place a note from W. A. B. Hamilton, R.N., dated Admiralty, December, 1847, to Mr. John Barrow, enclosing "extracts of letters from Commander Fitzjames to the latter, proposing to come home through Siberia on passing Behring's Strait:"†—

"Dear Barrow,—This is interesting at this time; they may be wintering this winter either at Okhotsk or Yakoutsch. You sent it to me before the expedition sailed. The enclosed extracts are:—'In whatever year the expedition gets through Behring's Strait the month will be August or September, so that there will be time to go at once to Okhotsk and start off for Petersburg; but in case of it being too late in the season to attempt the journey through Siberia, a winter would be profitably employed at either Okhotsk, Yakoutsch, Tomsk, or Tobolsk, in taking magnetic observations, which would form a chain of them round the world. . . Sir John Franklin tells me he had thought of such a journey for some officer; and Col. Sabine says it would be highly desirable and interesting.' In another letter (his

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1848," p. 33.

† *Ibid.*, p. 77.

last to me), Capt. Fitzjames says, 'I do hope and trust that, if we get through, we shall land at Petropaulowski, and that I may be allowed to come home through Siberia; I shall do all in my power to urge Sir John Franklin to let me go, and I do wish the Russian Government had been asked to send to their governors, &c., that they may expect me, and not oppose my going on: this was done in former expeditions, as I have just read in Beechey's account of the voyage of the *Dorothea* and *Trent*. . . It is not now too late to send to St. Petersburg, and could do no harm: get through I firmly believe we shall.' "

These notes show the cheerful, confident feeling of the gallant Fitzjames; they indicate, too, the daring but hopeful spirit of all on board the *Erebus* and *Terror*. Here we are bound to record the generous conduct of the Russian Government and its minister, Baron Brunnow, in the offers of assistance, should the Franklin or the searching expeditions require it in any part of the Russian territories.

The Admiralty, after much deliberation and careful weighing of the various plans and suggestions, had now resolved to send out three searching expeditions,—one by Barrow's Strait, another down the Mackenzie River, and a third to Behring's Strait.

It will have been seen the plans and suggestions embrace a wide field for search; but as yet, happily, reason rules. The original plan of Sir John Barrow, and the Instructions, founded upon it, given to Sir John Franklin, are as yet the only text consulted upon which the operations of the searching expeditions (whether by sea or land) are to be directed. It is true, alleged intentions on the part of Franklin are brought forward, and the North obtains some notice, but not of sufficient interest to withdraw attention from that unknown space (between 98° and 115° W.) to which the Franklin Expedition was specially directed, as offering the best prospects of "a Passage."

CHAPTER V.

PLOVER—CAPTAIN MOORE SAILS FOR BEHRING'S STRAITS—REPORTED RUMOURS FROM PEEL RIVER—SIR JOHN RICHARDSON'S FINAL PLAN—DR. KING'S LETTER—SIR EDWARD PARRY'S AND SIR J. C. ROSS' REMARKS ON IT.

NOTHING having been heard of the Franklin Expedition up to 1848, now absent nearly three years—the time for which it was provisioned—the Government, as we have said, having matured their plans, now set to work in good earnest to adopt the most complete and effectual means for their relief. The *Plover*, Commander Moore, was ordered to Behring's Strait,* there to be joined by the *Herald*, Capt. Henry Kellett, C.B.† The Instructions may be briefly given thus:—"They" are to proceed along the American coast as far as possible, without "being beset." Having found a harbour for the *Plover*, "two boats are to proceed along the coast in search of the voyagers (Franklin's Expedition), and to communicate, if possible, with the party which it is intended shall descend the Mackenzie River, under the command of Sir John Richardson," and "so soon as symptoms of . . . winter appear to return to the *Plover*. The *Herald* will then return to the southward for provisions, &c., and return northward about July, 1849; re-equipping the *Plover* for passing a second winter on that part of the coast, . . . and for repeating the same operations for the search after and for the relief of Sir John Franklin."

These instructions seem to have been framed to meet every contingency should Franklin have succeeded in getting to the American coast west of the Mackenzie River.

The *Plover* sailed from Sheerness, January 1st, 1848.

The following extract of a letter, dated from Peel River, December 17th, 1847, from Mr. Peers, excited a good deal of attention at the time:‡—"I have reason to believe that some white men were off the coast last summer; as a party of Indians, who came here this fall,

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1848," pp. 7-16.

† Instructions of a similar tenor were sent to Captain Henry Kellett, C.B., of H.M.S. *Herald*.

‡ See "Nautical Magazine" for 1848.

stated that they were some days in company with the Esquimaux east of the Mackenzie River, in the summer. The latter showed the former knives (like our scalp-ers) and files, that they said were given to them gratis by some white men whom they saw in two 'large boats,' and who spoke to them in a language they did not understand."

Sir John Richardson, in submitting his final detailed plan of proceedings, London, February 18th, 1848,* says:—"Section 6. If we reach the sea in the first week of August, I hope to be able to make the complete voyage to the Coppermine River, and also to coast a considerable part of the western and southern shores of Wollaston Land." And in Section 11:—"A second summer (1849) I propose . . . to examine the passages between Wollaston and Banks' and Victoria Lands, so as to cross the routes of some of Sir J. C. Ross's detached parties." We have been particular to notice these arrangements, as they go to show that parties were to be despatched from Barrow's Strait from the north-east in search of Franklin to the south-west; rightly, in short, searching for the Franklin Expedition in the direction in which it was sent: folly had not then taken a final stand on the vision of a Wellington Channel route.

We shall now give extracts from a letter of Dr. King† to the Admiralty, dated February 16, 1848, on the subject of the Arctic Expeditions:‡—"The old route of Parry, through Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait, as far as the last land on its southern shore, and thence in a direct line to Behring's Strait, is the route ordered to be pursued by Franklin.§ . . . The gallant officer has thus been despatched to push his adventurous way between Melville Island and Banks' Land, which Sir Edward Parry attempted for two years unsuccessfully. He reported:—"The navigation of this part of the Polar

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1848," p. 39.

† This gentleman was with Sir George Back down the Great Fish River in 1833-4-5; Sir George thus speaks of him:—"I cannot close this preliminary statement without conveying the public expression of my thanks to Mr. Richard King for his uniform attention to the health of the party, and the readiness with which he assisted me in all cases where his services were required." &c., &c.—("Arctic Land Expedition," by Captain Back.) Notwithstanding this testimonial, Dr. King's services appear to have been overlooked. Dr. King has made many offers of service to the Government, and we should have noticed them before but they embody the same views as the one above, which, being official, we select. (See his "Narrative of a Journey to the Arctic Ocean," published 1836, and "The Franklin Expedition, from First to Last," 1855.)

‡ See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1848," p. 41.

§ See Barrow's "Arctic Voyages from 1818," p. 11.

Sea is only to be performed by watching the occasional opening between the ice and the shore, and therefore a continuity of land is essential for this purpose; such a continuity of land was here about to fail us.* Assuming, therefore, Sir John Franklin has been arrested between Melville Island and Banks' Land, where Sir Edward Parry was arrested by difficulties which he considered insurmountable, and he has followed the advice of that gallant officer, and made for the continuity of America; he will have turned the prow of his vessels south and west, according as Banks' Land trends for Victoria or Wollaston Lands. It is here, therefore, that we may expect to find the expedition wrecked, when they will make in their boats for the western land of North Somerset, if that land should not be too far distant. . . . In order to save the party from the ordeal of a fourth winter, when starvation must be their lot, I propose to undertake the boldest journey that has ever been attempted in the northern regions of America, one which would be justifiable only from the circumstances. I propose to attempt to reach the western land of North Somerset, or the eastern portion of Victoria Land, as may be deemed advisable, by the close of the approaching summer; to accomplish, in fact, in one summer that which has not been done under two. I rest my hope of success in the performance of this Herculean task upon the fact that I possess an intimate knowledge of the country and the people; . . . the health to stand the rigour of the climate, and the strength to undergo the fatigue of mind and body to which I must be subjected. It is because I have these requisites, which I conscientiously believe are not to be found in another, that I hope to effect my purpose. A glance at the map of North America . . . will make it apparent that to render assistance to a party situated on that coast, there are two ways by sea and one by land. Of the two seaways, the route by the Pacific is altogether out of the question; it is an idea of bygone days; while that by the Atlantic is so doubtful of success that it is merely necessary to put this assistance aside as far from certain, to mention that Sir John Ross found Barrow's Strait closed in the summer of 1832. To a land journey, then, alone, we can look for success. . . . To the western land of North Somerset, where Sir John Franklin is likely to be found, the Great Fish River is the direct and only route; and, although the approach to it is through a country too poor and too difficult of access to admit of the transport of provision, it may be made the medium of communication

* See Parry, "Voyage for the Discovery of a North-West Passage, 1819-20," p. 242.

between the lost expedition and the civilized world, and guides be thus placed at their disposal to convey them to the hunting-grounds of the Indians. . . . The fact that all lands which have a *western* aspect are generally ice free, which I dwelt largely upon when Sir John Franklin sailed, must have had weight with that gallant officer; he will, therefore, on finding himself in a serious difficulty, while pushing along the eastern side of Victoria Land, at once fall upon the western land of North Somerset as a refuge ground if he have the opportunity. The effort by Behring's Strait and Banks' Land is praiseworthy in attempt but forlorn in hope. In the former effort it is assumed that Sir John Franklin has made the passage, and that his arrest is between the Mackenzie River and Icy Cape; in the latter, that Sir James Ross will reach Banks' Land, and trace its continuity to Victoria and Wollaston Land, and thus make the passage (?) . . . First, we have no reason to believe that Sir John Franklin, or Sir James Ross, will be more fortunate than their predecessors. Second, we are unable to assume that Sir James Ross will reach Banks' Land: Sir Edward Parry was unable to reach it, and only viewed it from a distance; much less are we able to assume that the gallant officer will find a high road to Victoria Land, which is altogether a *terra incognita*."

"The main point, then, for consideration, is the effort of Sir James Ross along the western land of North Somerset, from his station in Barrow's Strait,* for it is that alone can supersede the plan which I have proposed. It is not in Sir John Richardson's power . . . to search the western land of North Somerset. Mr. Thomas Simpson . . . has set that question at rest. . . . A further exploration, remarks Mr. Thomas Simpson, 'from the most eastern limit of his journey, would necessarily demand the whole time and energies of another expedition, having some point of retreat much nearer to the scene of operations than Great Bear Lake;'[†] and Great Bear Lake is to be the retreat of Sir John Richardson. The Doctor then asks, "What retreat could Mr. Simpson have meant but Great Slave Lake, the retreat of the land party in search of Sir John Ross? and what other road to the unexplored ground, the western land of North Somerset, could that traveller have meant than Great Fish River; that stream which I have pointed out as the ice-free and high road to the land where the lost expedition is likely to be found?" The Doctor continues, "if Mr. Simpson, in the youth of his life, . . . could not

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition," p. 29.

† See Simpson's "Discoveries on the North Coast of America," p. 377.

make a greater distance from Great Bear Lake than Castor and Pollux River, . . . can more be expected of Sir John Richardson, at his period of life? It is physically impossible that Sir John Richardson can occupy the field which I am proposing for myself: this is evidently a question of importance. . . . Does the attempt of Sir James Clarke Ross to search the western land of North Somerset in his boats from his station in Barrow's Strait render that proposal unnecessary? The Doctor sums up:—"Here the facts will speak for themselves:—1st, Barrow's Strait was icebound in 1832, it may be in 1848; 2nd, Sir James Clarke Ross is using the same means to relieve Sir John Franklin which has led the gallant officer into his difficulty; the relief party may, therefore, become themselves a party in distress; 3rd, The land that is made on the south shore of Barrow's Strait will be of doubtful character, the natural consequence of discovery in ships; the searching parties, at the end of the summer, may find they have been coasting an island many miles distant from the western land of North Somerset, or navigating a deep bay" or "sound. The plan which I have proposed, is to reach the Polar Sea across the continent of America, and thus to proceed from land known to be continent, where every footstep is sure."

In extracting these passages, we have, with the desire to do justice to Dr. King, been sorely puzzled; the assertions, the assumptions, and the inferences, are so bold, so questionable. Their Lordships seem to have laboured under the influence of a similar feeling, and therefore referred his letter to Sir Edward Parry and Sir James Ross for their opinions.

Sir Edward Parry replies from Royal Hospital, Haslar, February 23, 1848:—"My former opinion, quoted by Dr. King, as to the difficulty of ships penetrating to the westward beyond Cape Dundas, remains unaltered; . . . and I should expect that Sir John Franklin, being aware of this difficulty, would use his utmost efforts to get to the southward and westward before he approached that point; that is, between the 100th and 110th degree of longitude. The more I have considered the subject, . . . the more difficult I find it to conjecture where the expedition may have been stopped, . . . but as no information has reached up to this time, I conceive that there is some considerable probability of their being situated somewhere between the longitudes I have just named. How far they have penetrated to the southward, . . . must be a matter of speculation, depending

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition," p. 48.

on the state of the ice and the existence of land in a space hitherto a blank on our maps. . . . Be this as it may, I consider it not improbable, as suggested by Dr. King, that an attempt 'will be made by them to fall back on the western coast of North Somerset, wherever that may be found, as being the nearest point affording a hope of communication.' . . . Agreeing thus far with Dr. King, I am compelled to differ with him entirely as to the readiest mode of reaching that coast, because I feel satisfied that . . . the expedition now equipping under Sir James Ross . . . will render it a matter of no very difficult enterprise to examine the coast in question, . . . whereas an attempt to reach that coast by an expedition from the continent of America must be extremely hazardous and uncertain. . . . And as I understand it to be their Lordships' intention to direct Sir James Ross to station one of the ships about Cape Walker while the other proceeds on the search, and likewise to equip his boats specially for . . . examining the various coasts and inlets, I am decidedly of opinion that as regards the western coast of North Somerset, this plan will be much more likely to answer than any overland expedition. . . . In regard to Dr. King's suggestion respecting Victoria and Wollaston Lands, . . . it does seem . . . not improbable that parties may attempt the continent in that direction; but not being well acquainted with the facilities for reaching the coast of America opposite those lands, I am not competent to judge of its practicability."

Sir James Ross replies by a series of remarks on Dr. King's letter :* — "First, Dr. King begins by assuming that Sir John Franklin has attempted to push the ships through to the westward, between Melville Island and Banks' Land (although directly contrary to his Instructions); that having been arrested by insurmountable difficulties, . . . he would . . . make for the west coast of North Somerset. If the expedition failed to penetrate to the westward between Banks' Land and Melville Island, it is very probable it would have next attempted . . . a more southerly course, and . . . after making . . . (say 100 miles) to the south-west . . . and then finally stopped or wrecked, the calamity will have occurred in about lat. $72\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N. and long. 115° W. This point is only 280 miles from the Coppermine River, and 420 miles from the Mackenzie; either of which, therefore, would be easily attainable, and . . . abundance of provisions. . . . At the point above mentioned, the distance from the

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1848," p. 44.

west coast of North Somerset is probably 360 miles, and the mouth of the Great Fish River full 500; at neither of these places could they hope to obtain a single day's provisions for so large a party; and Sir John Franklin's intimate knowledge of the impossibility of ascending that river, or obtaining . . . food, . . . would concur in deterring him from attempting to gain either of those points. . . . I think it most probable that . . . he would . . . retrace his steps, and passing through the channel by which he had advanced, . . . seek the whale-ships which annually visit the west coast of Baffin's Bay.

"Secondly, It is far more probable . . . that Sir John Franklin, in obedience to his Instructions, would endeavour to push his ships to the south and west, as soon as they had passed Cape Walker; and the consequence of such a measure, owing to the known prevalence of westerly wind and the drift of the main body of the ice, would be (in my opinion) their inevitable embarrassment; and if he persevered in that direction, which he probably would do, I have no hesitation in stating my conviction that he would never be able to extricate his ships, and would ultimately be obliged to abandon them. It is therefore in lat. 73° N., and long. 105° W., that we may expect to find them involved in the ice, or shut up in some harbour. . . . This is almost the only point in which it is likely they would be detained, or from which it would not be possible to convey information . . . to the Hudson's Bay Company's settlements. . . . If, then, . . . compelled to abandon their vessels at or near this point, they would endeavour . . . to reach Lancaster Sound; but I cannot conceive any position . . . from which they would make for the Great Fish River, or at which any party descending that river would be likely to overtake them; and even if it did, of what advantage could it be to them?

"Thirdly, If Dr. King and his party in their single canoe did fall in with Sir John Franklin, . . . on the west coast of North Somerset, how does he propose to assist them? He would have barely provisions for his own party, and would more probably be in a condition to require rather than afford relief.

"Sixthly, Dr. King states, 'that Barrow's Strait was icebound in 1832;' I need only observe, that Barrow's Strait was not icebound in 1832, nor during any of the other seven seasons I have passed through that strait and Lancaster Sound, . . . nor have I ever heard of their having been found so . . . during the last thirty years."

No one acquainted with the subject can avoid noticing the common

sense view of the question these replies take; they involve the whole bearing of the original plan, and the Instructions framed upon it.

Sir Edward Parry, after reverting to his opinions of 1820, founded on the facts then before him, and that they had remained unaltered, remarks:—"Franklin, being aware of the difficulties besetting him (Sir Edward) between Melville Island and Banks' Land, would avoid them, and would endeavour to effect the passage between 100° and 110° W., in the open space between Cape Walker and Banks' Land." The absence of information only seems to confirm him in this view; but how far south, as he wisely observes, is "a matter of speculation," depending wholly on obstacles he may meet with from ice, or "the existence of land in the space hitherto a blank upon our maps."

We need not say, this perfectly accords with Franklin's Instructions; but, regarding the western coast of North Somerset, this coast not having been visited, and consequently not "laid down," being without definite limits west, we cannot see how it can be calculated as a point "to fall back on."

We heartily coincide with Sir Edward Parry as to the hazard and uncertainty of the attempt to relieve Franklin by the Great Fish River.

Sir James Ross:—we pass over his arguments to controvert the assumption of Dr. King, that Franklin was ordered to push his ships between Melville Island and Banks' Land. The simple fact of Sir John Barrow not having said so, and the rejection of the assertion by reference to the Instructions, was and is quite enough, without additional argument and farther conjecture on the matter. The second section fully illustrates the meaning of Franklin's Instructions, directing him to Cape Walker and the south-west, and the position indicated by lat. 73° N., long. 105° W., shows careful investigation. His conviction as to the fate of the expedition bears the spirit of prophecy. The advantages offered for escape by Lancaster Sound instead of the Hudson's Bay Company's settlements—the improbability of the expedition making for the Great Fish River, and the almost utter impracticability of sending aid to Franklin by that river,—all these we concur in, we have always thought them the only reasonable conclusions which could be arrived at under the circumstances, having no information to guide us.

The Instructions alone can tell us where we sent him, and they alone can indicate the course we should pursue in following with the hope of recovering him. How much it is to be regretted that the sense of these replies was not adopted in framing Instructions for the future searching expeditions!

But we turn now to Dr. King's letter. We do not like its irregular style; we had rather it had been less presumptive, less egotistical, more consecutive and clear; but it is another instance how judgments may be warped and perverted by the adoption of one idea to the exclusion of all others; we shall have occasion to notice equal errors in others, arising from the same narrowness of view. What, indeed, has called forth these pages but the fatal consequences that have arisen from prejudice, from hasty assumption and imaginative wandering in favour of particular routes, places, and means?

The Doctor surely cannot have read the Instructions, or he would have found at Sections 5 and 6 not only directions where to go from Cape Walker to the south-west, but also cautions where not to go, so as to prevent "loss of time." The quotation from Barrow's "Arctic Voyages," p. 11, is correct, but Dr. King's reading of the passage is not so; by "as far as to the last land on its southern shore," Sir John Barrow meant "Cape Walker, the last land on the south of Barrow's Strait." * The arguments, therefore, on his reading of the passage fall to the ground. We cannot understand this eternal references (not only of Dr. King's, but others) to the west coast of North Somerset. In the then state of our knowledge it was not known how far west it extended (see the Admiralty Charts), it may have had Cape Walker for its western limit, or even Banks' Land. To assume, then, that the boats of the expedition (prematurely pronounced wrecked), should endeavour to make for a land unknown, through a sea unknown, seems to us to border closely on the wild visions of unbridled thought, from which reasonable conjecture shrinks. Relief by that "execrable river," the Great Fish River,† advocated by Dr. King, we ever did and do consider altogether impracticable for the purpose, not only as being "through a country too poor and too difficult of access," but also as not being "the ice-free and high road to the land" or sea where the expedition was likely to be found. It was, in short, the last place we should have looked for any information or traces of the Franklin Expedition,—speaking at this period, and of what was then known of the position and trendings of the

* See a copy of the original "Proposal for an Attempt to Complete the Discovery of a North-West Passage," submitted to the Royal Society, December, 1844; in a pamphlet, "Arctic Expeditions: a Lecture," by Mr. C. R. Weld, 1850, p. 18; also, Memorandum from Sir John Barrow, July, 1847, Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expeditions," p. 72.

† See Back's "Narrative of the Arctic Land Expedition to the Mouth of the Great Fish River, 1833-5;" also, "King's Journey to the Arctic Ocean, 1833-5."

land about here, as then shown on our charts. It is true, there was the supposed channel or passage between Back's Great Fish River and the bottom of Regent's Inlet; but that was questionable. We are aware that the Esquimaux report, and the sad relics brought home by Rae (1854), are now commonly quoted as proof of the accuracy of Dr. King's views; but, notwithstanding these, and the position in which they were found, we cannot consider them as any proof that, because they were found there, Dr. King is right in his conjectures. We should have looked for parties seeking relief retracing their way to the eastward in Barrow's Strait, at Fury Beach, &c., or to the westward to the Coppermine or Mackenzie; but last of all should we have looked to the Great Fish River for them. The fact of the relics being found at Montreal Island is due altogether to another cause, which does not seem to have occurred to Dr. King, but of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter in our inquiries, to ascertain where that party who brought them, and who are said to have perished there—came from?

The Doctor, speaking of "lands having a western aspect being generally ice free," claims to be the first to point out that fact; we beg to refer him to "Voyages into the Arctic Regions," by Sir John Barrow, published in 1818: at page 372 he will there find it already described as a "well-established fact;" and Sir Edward Parry, in his Journal, 1819-20, remarking on the probable existence of a North-West Passage, page 297, says:—"I should . . . confidently hope to find the difficulties lessen in proportion as we advanced towards the latter sea (Pacific); especially as it is well known that the climate of any given parallel on that side of America is, no matter from what cause, very many degrees more temperate than on the eastern coast." Sir John Franklin was quite aware of this fact,* but still, according to the Doctor, after having "*turned the prows of his vessels south and west*,"—"from between Melville Island and Banks' Land," he will have Franklin rushing into difficulty and "pushing along the *eastern side of Victoria Land*," a coast *as yet undefined*, and bearing from "*between Melville Island and Banks' Land, as near as can be assumed, south-east*." And then comes again the undelineated coast of North Somerset, as refuge ground for Franklin, and a point of relief for Dr. King, by the way of the Great Fish River. The Doctor says:—"It is not in Sir John Richardson's power" to reach the western land of North Somerset, and then quotes a passage from Mr. Simpson's

* See "The Franklin Expedition, First and Last," by Dr. King, p. 15.

narrative, in support of that^{*} assertion; the passage referred to was made by that gentleman in reference to—not North Somerset, but to a much more extensive exploration, viz., to Fury and Hecla Strait; and he argues, “if Mr. Simpson, in the youth of life, . . . could not make a greater distance” from his winter’s quarters (Great Bear Lake) “can more be expected of Sir John Richardson, at his period of life?” This comparison, to say the least of it, is coarse and indelicate towards that distinguished Arctic veteran, that kind-hearted, excellent man. We shall conclude:—“The land,” the Doctor says, “that is made on the south shore of Barrow’s Strait, will be of *doubtful* character, the natural consequence of discovery in ships.” All lands are doubtful until discovered, whether in ships or boats, or by land parties.

We have been compelled to enter at some length on Dr. King’s letter, inasmuch as his views have been noticed largely, and have gained a sort of notoriety and a praise which we cannot think is quite due to them; still, of his ability and capability we have not a doubt; but the soundness of his views regarding the relief of the Franklin Expedition we must very much question.

Our great object, again, has been to show that Dr. King, with Sir Edward Parry and Sir James Ross, all look to the west and south for the expedition, and not to the north.

The Lords of the Admiralty,* by letters dated 6th and 14th March, 1848, to the Commissioners of Customs, offered rewards to the whalers visiting Lancaster Sound, &c.

Lady Franklin, 20th March, also offered £2,000 to the whalers for the exploration of Prince Regent’s Inlet, Admiralty Inlet, Jones’ Sound, or Smith’s Sound.

Lady Franklin, in a letter to Mr. Barrow at this time, March, 1848, says:†—“I have never been able to divest myself of the idea that in case of shipwreck on the west coast of North Somerset, our friends might endeavour to make their way across Prince Regent’s Inlet, towards the fishing grounds of the whalers. With respect to the sounds north of Baffin’s Bay, Colonel Sabine has told me that my husband mentioned to him, that if he were baffled everywhere else, he might perhaps look into these before he returned home. It was suggested to me to add Admiralty Inlet, though I do not think it likely that they should get in there. It is not probable, indeed, that they should be found in any of these places, but there is a possibility

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, “Arctic Expedition, 1848,” pp. 47-9.

† *Ibid.*, p. 49.

of it. . . . I have ever had it much to heart, and have it still, that the Hudson's Bay Company should be urged to do their utmost with their unequalled resources to search themselves. . . . Give them his Instructions, and a clear outline of the present expeditions, and leave the manner of doing it to themselves."

The west coast of North Somerset is here again obtruded upon the attention. Where do they fix this west coast of North Somerset? We know Capes Rennell and Walker, to the north, and Cape Nicolai, to the south, but not the intermediate space. As to the sounds north of Baffin's Bay, it is a pity they are mentioned at all. Franklin was not ordered in that direction. When the coasts and seas in the direction in which he was ordered have been examined, then the places not of the Instructions, but mentioned in private conversation, may be thought of, but not until then.

We fear, from the above extract, already traces of distracted views appear; and that, too, before any search has been made at all in the direction in which the Franklin Expedition was sent.

Sir John Richardson,* accompanied by Dr. Rae † (Hudson's Bay Company), with efficient boats' crews, were directed, *via* the Hudson's Bay Company's territories, to the Mackenzie River; their instructions were "to examine . . . the coast between the Mackenzie and the Coppermine Rivers; and also to coast . . . the western and southern shores of Wollaston Land;" and "if necessary" to devote a second summer (1849), "to examine the passages between Wollaston and Banks' and Victoria Lands, so as to cross the routes of some of Sir James Ross's detached parties." In the spring of 1850 to return to England. These Instructions embrace all the points within which Franklin was expected to emerge from the north-east (Cape Walker). Sir John Richardson and Dr. Rae left England 25th March, 1848.

Sir James Ross, in the *Enterprise*, and Captain E. J. Bird, in the *Investigator*, fully manned and equipped, were now despatched to Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Straits. The Instructions given to this, the first of the searching expeditions sent in that direction, and to follow the footsteps of Sir John Franklin, are briefly extracted, as follows:—

"Whereas the period for which H.M.S. *Erebus* and *Terror* were

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition, 1848," pp. 19—21.

† This gentleman was already known for his discoveries at the bottom of Prince Regent's Inlet, 1846-7,—by which he proved the non-existence of a channel between it and the entrance of Back's River, to the westward,—and for the admirable manner in which he carried out that expedition.

virtualled will terminate at the end of this summer, and whereas no tidings whatever of the proceedings of either of those ships have reached us since their first entry into Lancaster Sound in the year 1845, and there being therefore reason to apprehend that they have been blocked up by immovable ice, and that they may soon be exposed to suffer by privation, we have deemed it proper to defer no longer the endeavour to afford them adequate relief." After reciting the means placed at his command, Sir James Ross is directed "to proceed without delay to Lancaster Sound. . . In your progress through that inlet to the westward, you will carefully search both shores, as well as those of Barrow's Strait. Should your early arrival there . . . admit of your at once extending a similar examination to the shores of Wellington Channel, it will leave you at greater liberty to devote yourself more fully afterwards to your researches to the westward. The several intervals of coast that appear in our charts to lie between Cape Clarence and Walker must be carefully explored;" and after alluding to the facilities in boats, &c., given to him:—"We trust, by these means, all preliminary researches may be completed during the present season." Near Cape Rennell is indicated for securing the *Investigator* for the ensuing winter, "as from that position a very considerable extent of coast may be explored on foot, and in the following spring detached parties may be sent across the ice by Captain Bird, in order to look thoroughly into the creeks along the western coast of Boothia, and even as far as Cape Nicholai; while another party may proceed to the southward, and ascertain whether the *blank space* shown there in our charts consists of an open sea, through which Sir John Franklin may have passed," or "islands among which he may be still blocked up. . . The *Enterprise*, in the meantime, will press forward to the westward, and endeavour to reach Winter Harbour, in Melville Island; or, perhaps, if circumstances render it advisable, to push onward to Banks' Land. . . . From this western station you will be able to spread some active parties, and make some short and useful excursions, before the season altogether closes, and still more effective ones in the ensuing spring. One party should then pursue the coast, in whatever direction it may seem likely to have been followed by Sir John Franklin, and thus determine the general shape of Banks' Land; it is then to proceed to Cape Bathurst or Cape Parry, on the mainland, at each of which places we have directed Sir John Richardson to leave provisions, and on to Fort Hope and England. . . . Another party will explore the eastern coast of Banks' Land, and from thence make at once for

Cape Krusenstern. . . . They should communicate immediately with him (Sir John Richardson), according to the agreement which he and you have made, and placing themselves under his orders, they will assist him in examining the shores of Victoria and Wollaston Island, and finally return with him to England. . . . We direct you to consider the foregoing orders as the general outline of our desires, and not as intended too rigidly to control your proceedings."

We cannot resist a remark or two on these Instructions. It should be remembered that this was the first expedition sent out to ascertain what had befallen the gallant Franklin and his companions. Three years had been permitted to pass away in uncertainty and suspense, and rumour, with her thousand false tongues, had assigned every variety of distressful form to the absent navigators, adding to the anxiety and anguish arising from absence. It behoved us, therefore, to be clear and decisive in what was to be done; in fact, taking the Instructions given to Franklin as our guide, to follow on his trail. We can understand that Barrow's Strait, north and south to Wellington Channel, on the one hand, and to Cape Clarence and between it and Cape Walker, on the other, should be thoroughly searched in passing, preparatory to a more extended one to the westward; but why the intermediate coast from Barrow's Strait south as far as Cape Nicholai, we cannot so readily comprehend. If considered under the idea of a retreating party, we should have looked for them in Barrow's Strait. The strait of James Ross, and the supposed channel from Back's River to Regent's Inlet, offered a means of escape to Fury Beach; but we had not reached Cape Walker, to which Franklin was specially directed: we did not know what important information might be awaiting us there. The search to the south in the direction of Cape Nicholai was therefore premature; we should have paused before we made any search in that direction.

In endeavouring to escape, Franklin would look south and west to the American continent, and not south-east, unless under very peculiar circumstances, or east by Barrow's Strait, for succour. But surely it appears far more reasonable, after due examination of the various headlands and entrances to the inlets along the course of Barrow's Strait to Cape Walker, that that cape should have been made a primary object for arrival at and for departure to the south-west; but it seems strange that it is nowhere mentioned in these Instructions. Again: the western division was to endeavour to reach Melville Island or Banks' Land. This was all well. But here, again, one party is to pursue the direction "likely to have been followed by Franklin,"

and thus determine the western face of Banks' Land; by which we are led to infer that he attempted to pass down this western face. Here we are at a loss; we cannot conceive under what circumstances it could be thought that Franklin would be found there. He was not ordered there: why and how did he get there? If he had been enabled to get to the south-west, we ought to look for him between Banks' and Wollaston Lands, judging from what was known and laid down on the charts of the period; but this would lead him to the southward, and we should most likely have heard of him *via* the American continent. We cannot imagine he attempted the forbidden channel between Banks' Land and Melville Island: we can only suppose, then, that it was contemplated that, shut out from the south, he made westing, and then attempted some northern route between the Parry Islands, and came down on their western side, and so on to the western side of Banks' Land; but this is too hypothetical to be admitted; the northern and western limits of the whole of the islands or lands north of $74\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N. and west to 115° W. were unknown. The search, then, of the western coast of Banks' Land at this early period we think quite unnecessary. We had not ascertained that he had been compelled to a northern route; it was, therefore, needlessly exhausting the energies of the expedition. The examination of the eastern shores of Banks' Land is more within reason. Throughout these Instructions there is no specific mention of the space between Cape Walker and Banks' Land, that important space which gave such fair prospects of a passage to the veteran promoter of the Franklin Expedition.

This expedition sailed 12th June, 1848.

With the departure of the last of these well-arranged, well-equipped expeditions followed the most heartfelt wishes and sincere prayers for success. Their united efforts were to be concentrated around that area or space which embraced the whole substance of the Plan to which the talent and the daring of Sir John Franklin and his companions were so specially directed—to complete, once and for all, the question of a North-West Passage. The highest hopes and the warmest anticipations were, therefore, entertained—nothing short of the joyful restoration of the absent voyagers to their country and their homes. While they pursue their way on their sacred mission, it may not be out of place here to glance briefly at the various plans, and the opinions arising out of them at this period. They present already great diversity of direction; their range is very extended; and yet all are derived from the same source—the same simple Plan,

and the same clear Instructions. The majority show, however, that the original idea of the voyage is understood. One is particularly incoherent, wandering, and vague; it is next to impossible to conclude, with certainty, what is meant. He assumes intentions at variance with the express intent of the voyage, and gives for the Expedition a most improbable position, a position in direct violation of its orders; still he *looks west, not north*. There are three who are *really* Arctic authorities, whose opinions are founded on a simple interpretation of Sections 5 and 6 of Franklin's Instructions; and there is also another, whose general views are sound as to the space to which the ships were sent, and particularly in his opinion as to their position; but he looks on other and irrelevant matter, which weakens and detracts from his otherwise sound arguments. One passes over altogether, without notice, the object and direction of the Expedition, and looks to the north alone; he would extend the search in an improbable direction, and to a perplexing extent, only on *talked-of* "*intentions*," casually expressed by Sir John Franklin before his departure. There is yet another. He advocates a search in a doubtful direction; he asserts and re-asserts the soundness of his views; at last believes them to be facts, and argues from them as though they were so; still their locality, though doubtful, is in the *south*, and the *north is unthought of*. Thus do they vary, and yet Franklin is as yet unsought for. His movements, beyond his orders, are wholly unknown.

The sum of these plans and opinions amounts to this; that while the majority of the distinguished men we have so fully quoted leave not a doubt as to the clearness and intent of the Instructions given to Franklin for his guidance, there are two who speak of Franklin having "*intentions*" beside them; in fact, in complete opposition to them. Whether these supposed intentions have or may influence the direction of the efforts of the after searching squadrons—may draw them from the true direction of search (so clearly given in Sections 5 and 6) will be seen in the sequel; for ourselves, we have ever considered that Sir John Franklin would deem his Instructions absolute. Whatever private views he might have, whatever his wishes or intentions, he would make his opinions subordinate to the manifest tenor and spirit of his orders. This was his duty, and, because his duty, with him paramount to every consideration of private feeling. It will be observed, that even in the opinions advocating a search by the south and west, they vary in many points; this surprises us, because the space included between 70° and 74° N., and 98° and 115° W.,

was altogether unknown; it might be navigable water. If conjecture must be called in, why not have assumed a progress for the Expedition in the obvious direction to which the Instructions tended, rather than to other and less probable ones, involving, as we see, many points of difference? Again, there seems a feeling that the Expedition had attained large westing, which can only be accounted for by its continued absence, the known daring and perseverance of the navigators, and the imaginary freedom with which it was thought the Arctic seas could be navigated; for of positive information there was none: the fact is, conjecture was beginning to run wild. As to the north, while its advocates were equally destitute of all intelligence, they built up a theory of assumed intentions, unsupported by a single fact, that called aside and diverted attention from the Instructions, if it did no worse; but in attributing intentions foreign to his orders, they indirectly, but literally, involve the gallant Franklin in the grave charge of disobeying them, thus rendering him open to animadversion from any and every malicious or slanderous quarter,—thus doing a positive injury, as far as they are concerned, to this great man's name, unjust and perhaps irreparable!

An extract from a letter (dated York Factory, Aug. 28th, 1848)* from Mr. Hargreave to A. Barclay, Esq., Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company, may be noticed here: "I may mention, as a rumour possessing some interest, that in a private communication of March 1st from Mr. M'Pherson, of Mackenzie River District, he says:—'There is a report from Peel's River that the Esquimaux saw two large boats (query, ships?) to the eastward of the Mackenzie, full of white men, and they (the Esquimaux) showed knives, files, &c., to the Peel's River Indians, which they had received from these white men. Could these have been Franklin or Rae?' He adds: 'Rae never left the southern point of Committee Bay,' and 'Indian information is proverbial for its inaccuracy and exaggeration.'" This report seems to have the same source as that given by Mr. Pears (*ante*, p. 73). There is an appearance of truth about it. The articles given by the white men are specified, and indicate facts: we shall refer to them again.

Thus closed the year 1848. Many and various were the reports and rumours as to the movements and the fortunes of the Franklin Expedition, but *not a single fact* regarding it had reached England up to this time, since it parted from the whalers in Baffin's Bay. All plans and suggestions then, if not based on the Instructions issued for its guidance, were purely speculative—purely ideal.

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 188, "Arctic Expedition, 1849," p. 9.

CHAPTER VI.

INTELLIGENCE FROM SIR J. C. ROSS—OPINIONS—"NORTH STAR"
 SAILS—LIEUT. S. OSBORN—REWARDS—DR. M'CORMICK—SIR JOHN
 RICHARDSON—SIR JOHN ROSS—POND'S BAY REPORT—SIR J. C.
 ROSS RETURNS—SIR JOHN RICHARDSON ARRIVES—DR. RAE—SIR
 F. BEAUFORT—PROPOSED EXPEDITION BY BEHRING'S STRAIT—
 OPINIONS—HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY—MR. CHRISTOPHER—CAPT.
 PENNY—BEHRING'S STRAIT—1849 CLOSES.

1849.—THE year opened: anxiety betrayed her presence.

The Admiralty, having received intelligence from Sir James Ross (dated July 12th, 1848), from which they were led to infer that the *Investigator*, Captain Bird, would be sent to England in the summer of 1849, in which case the *Enterprise* would be left to prosecute the search alone; and this being considered unadvisable, not only as being unsafe but as likely to frustrate the objects of the expedition, various Arctic officers, &c., were consulted, and subsequently a meeting took place (January 17th, 1849).^{*} In the end, it was resolved the *North Star* should be laden with provisions, and sent to Barrow's Strait, under the command of Mr. Saunders, Master, R.N. The *North Star* sailed May 10th, 1849. Mr. Saunders's orders were to proceed to Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait, and endeavour to intercept the *Investigator*; failing to do so, he was to make for Whaler Point, Port Leopold, but should that point prove inaccessible on account of the ice, he was to leave notice there where he would land the provisions, &c., on the south side of Lancaster Sound. As some of these opinions embrace the line of search to be adopted for the recovery of the unfortunate Franklin, we shall notice them; they go partly to show the ideas prevailing at this period.

Sir George Back "is of opinion that Sir James Ross . . . should be left entirely to his own well known intelligence and discretion, nothing doubting that he will thoroughly explore the Wellington Channel, and other northern passages from Barrow's Strait."

Captain Beechey (January 12th, 1849) says:—"It can hardly be expected that full and efficient examination of every port in search of our forlorn countrymen can be made even by the two vessels there; such a search, I mean, as would alone satisfy this country, and in the lamentable event of hearing no more of the parties, would enable us to lay our heads on our pillows with the inward satisfaction of knowing that we had done all that humanity could suggest, and all

^{*} Parliamentary Papers, No. 186 II., "Arctic Expedition," pp. 1--10.

that a great nation, jealous of the lives of its subjects, could possibly have accomplished. Wellington Inlet, Bathurst Inlet, and Regent's Inlet, have all to be examined, in addition to the other routes contemplated by Sir James Ross. . . . Matters have arrived at such a crisis that merely sailing up and down an inlet will not satisfy us; a rigid, minute search of the shore must be made in boats from the ships; the hills must be ascended, the points and headlands examined, for traces of the objects of their search. . . . I am informed by Sir John Franklin's nearest connections, that he placed much reliance on Wellington Inlet. . . . It ought to be minutely examined, and traced to its head, as far as the ice will permit with safety."

Col. Sabine (January 9th, 1849):—"If Franklin has taken the south-westerly route after passing through the Strait (Barrow's), and has persevered in that course, we shall either hear of him on the side of Behring's Strait, or either Ross or Richardson will surely come upon his traces. . . . Circumstances may be different, however, if, failing in the south-west, he returned, . . . to make trial of Wellington Channel. . . . If that channel be, as it appeared to me, a continuation of the deep and open sea which we found in Barrow's Strait, and if it conduct into an open sea, . . . it may be far more difficult to determine the direction which Franklin may have taken, or to conjecture, otherwise than on the spot, the most eligible course by which he may be followed. It is to this quarter, therefore, that one's thoughts are naturally directed. . . . Supposing that there should appear to be no probability that Franklin has taken that direction (Wellington Channel), they might authorize . . . him to examine the sounds at the head of Baffin's Bay. . . . It was Franklin's declared intention, if he failed in one channel to attempt another, and not to desist, if possible, till he had tried all. . . . The search of the sounds referred to, even if unsuccessful, in the absence of more promising traces elsewhere, would be satisfactory."

Capt. Sir Edward Belcher (January 8th, 1849):—"It appears very clear to my mind, that Sir John Franklin could not have adopted the opening to the south-west of Melville Island, for two reasons;—first, because he would have fallen in with Esquimaux, who seem to abound about lat. 70° or 72°; secondly, from the tenor of the remarks of Capt. Parry, . . . it is not probable that he would be able to penetrate the frozen barrier there noticed. . . . If Sir John Franklin has met with the difficulty noticed in the voyage of Parry in 1819, he will of necessity have sought for a more northern route. . . . And if he succeeded, I think that the probabilities are

in favour of his safety until he reached the Arctic Circle; there he would be reduced to the necessity of following any open channels which offered southerly, and they may have led him to the northward of Asia, whence I have some slight suspicion that he will eventually emerge."

These opinions, it will be seen, are all founded on the word "if;" all on the assumption of failure to the south and west from Cape Walker, and we might so dismiss them; but we cannot, without remarking the little mention that is made of the direction in which the Franklin Expedition was really sent.

Sir George Back is particularly in favour of exploring the northern passage from Barrow's Strait; we would he had given his reasons.

Capt. Beechey feelingly describes how the search should be conducted, and names Wellington Channel; but it would seem, only from what he has heard of the stress laid upon it by Franklin himself. We cannot conceive Franklin as likely to have been very greatly influenced by the Wellington Channel route. There is little doubt he was consulted in the drawing up of his own Instructions; and had he given that channel a preference, he would have made it the primary object of his Instructions, and Melville Sound the secondary point for the solution of the question. Melville Sound was made primary, and this is the best proof that Wellington Channel did not possess that paramount influence over Franklin it is said to have done. Let any one consult Parry's chart (1819-20), and he will soon be convinced which offered the more favourable prospect "for the Passage,"—Wellington Channel, *without defined limits*, or the *limited area of Melville Sound*:—he may have spoken of it casually, but nothing more.

Colonel Sabine takes a general view of the tenor of Franklin's Instructions, but he betrays an evident bias in favour of the northern passages. Why his thoughts should be "naturally" directed to the Wellington Channel we cannot conceive; we should rather have thought they would have been more naturally directed to *Cape Walker and the south-west, until information had been received that Franklin had altogether failed in that quarter*. But Franklin's "declared intentions," and "the great Sound at the head of Baffin's Bay," exert a superlative influence over him; and they must be searched prior to the direction in which the Franklin Expedition was ordered.

Sir Edward Belcher gives two reasons for thinking Sir John Franklin "could not have adopted the opening south-west of Melville Island" (*i. e.*, between it and Banks' Land); we can give one more

cogent than both. By Section '6th *he is cautioned not to go there, because "it would involve loss of time," in consequence of the "unusual magnitude and apparently fixed state of the ice in that direction ;"* which Sir Edward seems to have been aware of, but not that the attempt that way was contrary to his Instructions. It was contrary ; and therefore the necessity "for a more northern route, in consequence of failure there, falls to the ground ; and with it all speculation as to where he will eventually emerge, . . . to the northward of Asia."

Some of the opinions offered about this time are so monstrous that we have often been led to think, the plan of the voyage and the Instructions have either not been understood or not consulted.

Additional instructions were sent by the whalers, and by the *North Star*, to Sir James Ross, making it imperative on him strictly to search the "Wellington Channel and its neighbourhood," as "Sir John Franklin attached very great importance to that opening, *in case of his failing . . . to the southward and westward.*" Notwithstanding, we presume to think the search to the *southward and westward should have been the first, and so to ascertain if he really had failed* in that direction. If not, we were liable to great error in the search, as we had nothing positive to guide us but his (Franklin's) Instructions. Without them all must be left to conjecture and chance. To think of leaving 138 gallant fellows to such uncertainty is fearful.

Lieut. (now Capt.) Sherard Osborn, in a letter to Sir Francis T. Baring, Bart.,* dated January 29th, 1849, "offered his services to lead a party from Hotham's Inlet (Behring's Strait), across the American continent towards the River Colville, . . . descend it, and examine the coast eastward to the . . . Mackenzie River, and ascend that river to winter at Fort Good Hope, or Franklin ;" or "from the neighbourhood of Mount Elias . . . strike across for the mouth of the Mackenzie River, trace the coast to Cape Anxiety, and return to Hotham's Inlet." The object is the examination of this part of the coast in case of unforeseen obstacles occurring to the party from the eastward. There is a misconception here. Richardson's party was not ordered to search west of the Mackenzie, but east, to the Coppermine. This plan assumes the probability of Franklin being west of the Mackenzie River.

At this time, March, 1849,† the Government offered £20,000, to which Lady Franklin added £3,000, to be given to such "exploring party or parties as may, in the judgment of the Admiralty, have ren-

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 128.

† *Ibid.*, p. 148.

dered efficient assistance to Sir John Franklin, his ships, or their crews." Attention was particularly directed to the "Gulf of Boothia, Regent's Inlet, the inlets or channels leading out of Barrow's Strait, or the sea beyond, either northward or southward; also, to any sounds or inlets in the north or western sides of Baffin's Bay, about lat. 75°. To our thinking, it had been better to have given a copy of Sir John Franklin's Instructions, and left their interpretation to those seeking the rewards.

Dr. B. M'Cormick, B.N.,* by a letter addressed to the Admiralty (dated April 24th, 1849), offered a plan for a boat expedition, and volunteered to conduct it. This plan is founded on the reported "intentions" expressed in Colonel Sabine's letter, March 5th, 1847:—"It was Sir John Franklin's intention, if foiled at one point, to try in succession all the probable openings into a more navigable part of the Polar Sea." He suggests, "that Jones' and Smith's Sounds, at the head of Baffin's Bay, should be carefully examined, . . . but more especially the former, it being the first opening north of the entrance to Lancaster Sound."

We have already ventured an opinion on the plans of search by the north, "from Melville Island in the west to the great Sound at the head of Baffin's Bay in the east." At this period there was no ground for thinking that Franklin would attempt "the Passage" by the north; he was ordered to the south-west. Had he been shut out from Barrow's Strait, and consequently, from the completion of the first part of his instructions, it would have been made known to us by cairns, flag-staves, &c., at the entrance of Lancaster Sound. We should have found notice, too, giving his reasons for adopting a new course more to the northward.

In the absence of these, surely it had been wiser to have followed Franklin where we sent him, and set at rest the question whether he had reached Cape Walker or not. By doing so, much confusion of ideas and trouble and hardship would have been avoided. It will be seen here, that the very mention of "intentions," other than those conveyed in the Instructions given to Franklin, is already producing a tendency to fatal error, distracting and drawing attention aside from the original objects of the plan and voyage of 1845. We see it developing itself in our respected friend, Dr. M'Cormick: intelligent, active, and enterprising, capable of any endurance, governed by an enthusiasm in the holy cause that knows no limits, yet, under the

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 121.

influence of sounding authority, he permits his judgment to be warped, and offers to attempt an impossibility—the examination of Jones' and Smith's Sounds in one season—volunteering, in short, to neutralize his best feelings and his brightest hopes, and perhaps sacrifice his life. How can we place a limit to time for the examination of parts whose limits we know not of?

In July, intelligence was received from Sir John Richardson, that that devoted friend and companion of Sir John Franklin had, during the summer of 1848, under much difficulty (from the early setting in of the winter) examined the Arctic shores of America, between the Mackenzie and Coppermine Rivers, without discovering any trace of the missing expedition. He says, in his Report to the Admiralty, dated from Great Bear Lake, 16th September, 1848:—"I shall endeavour to make arrangements for sending Mr. Rae, with one boat and a select crew of active men, down the Coppermine next July, to examine the opening between Victoria and Wollaston Lands. The flood tide, which, at full and change, runs in Dolphin and Union Straits at the rate of three knots an hour, comes from the eastward out of Coronation Gulf, and must flow primarily down the opening I have mentioned, or by the one between Victoria Land and Boothia, being the only two communications between Coronation Gulf and Lancaster Sound and its continuation. On this account, and also for the purpose of aiding a party which Sir James Ross proposed to send towards the Coppermine over the ice, Mr. Rae's expedition may be useful." There cannot be a question as to the justness of these remarks. They are, it is true, founded only on observation in a circumscribed area, very little known, but their reasonableness is obvious.

Sir John Ross (1st September, 1849) renewed his offers of service, with plans. The letter is addressed to Sir Francis Baring, Bart., Admiralty.†

These plans refer principally to the class of vessels desirable to employ. Davis' Strait and Lancaster Sound are incidentally mentioned, but no detailed plan of search is given. He repeated his offers (27th November, 1849), but still without any decided plan. These letters abound in flat contradiction of the opinions of others; altogether, they betray a morbid feeling which ill accords with the distressing nature of the subject. We care not to perpetuate them here.

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 497, "Arctic Expedition," pp. 1—3.

† *Ibid.*, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," pp. 111-12.

In October this year intense interest was excited by the report and sketch of four ships seen frozen in the ice, obtained from an Esquimaux at Pond's Bay, and brought home by the master of the *Truslove* whaler.* "It appears the *Chieftain* and other whalers got into Pond's Bay. . . . Immediately they reached that place some of the natives went on board, and without questioning the man drew the sketch, and by signs and in words in his own language, understood by the masters of the whalers, stated that two of the ships had been frozen up for four years on the west side of Prince Regent's Inlet, and that the other two had been frozen up on the east side for one year; that the two ships which had been there the longest had tried to get beyond Cape Rennell, but not being able had come into Prince Regent's Inlet to winter, where the ice had not broken up since; that he and his companions had been on board all the four ships in March last, and they were all safe." This account was greedily caught at, and the greatest hopes were entertained that Franklin and his companions were safe; but it seems great discrepancies are said to have arisen on examining the statement. A communication by signs and words, though apparently understood, must ever be open to misinterpretation. Again, the positions given for the ships could not be comprehended. Still, though not understood, there may have been some truth at the bottom of it. Our opinion at the time was, that the two westernmost ships might have been Franklin's, in Melville Sound, and the two easternmost Ross's, in Leopold Harbour. We did not believe it was altogether a fabrication. We could not see what object the Esquimaux could have for inventing such a tale. Again, the appearance of the ships bears evidence of fact about it; at any rate, the whalers believed it. They, being on the spot, were the best capable of judging of its truth. Some of them endeavoured to reach Regent's Inlet, but failed.†

Sir James Ross‡ unexpectedly returned, November 3rd, 1840. This expedition had been greatly retarded on its outward passage. It reached Port Leopold 11th September, 1848, barely in time to prevent being frozen in the pack, and wintered there. After the usual preliminary journeys, Sir James and a party left the ship on

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 70.

† This report and sketch is referred to in a very excellent paper "On the Probable Course pursued by Sir John Franklin's Expedition," by A. G. Findlay, Esq., published in the "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, 1856," vol. xvi., p. 26.

‡ See Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," pp. 58-64.

15th May for the west, by the north coast of North Somerset. He says, "The examination of all the inlets and smaller indentations of the coast, in which any ships might find shelter, occupied a large portion of our time, and cost us much labour; but it was necessary that every portion of the coast we passed along should be thoroughly explored. The north shore of North Somerset trends slightly to the northward of west, until after passing the extreme north cape of America, a few miles beyond Cape Rennell; from this point it trends slightly to the south of west, until after rounding Cape Bunny, when it suddenly assumes a nearly south direction. From the high land," about "Cape Bunny, we obtained a very extensive view, and observed that the whole space between it and Cape Walker to the west, and Wellington Channel to the north, was occupied by very heavy hummocky ice, whilst to the southward it appeared more favourable for travelling; I therefore determined not to divide the party, as I originally intended, until we should find a more practicable point for their exertions. We therefore proceeded to the south, tracing all the indentations of the coast. . . . The examination was pursued until the 5th June; when, having consumed more than half our provisions, and the strength of the party being much reduced, I was reluctantly compelled to abandon further operations, as it was necessary to give the men a day of rest. But that the time might not be wholly lost, I proceeded with two hands to the extreme south point in sight, distant about eight or nine miles.

"The extreme point of our operations is in lat. $72^{\circ} 38' N.$, and long. $95^{\circ} 40' W.$; it is the west point of a small, high peninsula, and the state of the atmosphere being at the time peculiarly favourable for distinctness of vision, land of any great elevation might have been seen at the distance of a hundred miles. The extreme high cape of the coast . . . was not more than fifty miles distant, still bearing nearly south, the land thus trending for Cape Nicolai. . . . We observed several capes and inlets between us and the southernmost cape; of whose continuity we could not be assured at so great a distance. . . . They are marked on the chart, . . . by which it will be perceived that a very narrow isthmus separates Prince Regent's Inlet from the western sea at Cresswell and Brentford Bays.

"If those we were in search of had at any time been upon the north or west coast of North Somerset, we must have met with some traces of them. . . . Had they abandoned their ships at Melville Island, they must have arrived on either of these shores long before this time."

"During my absence, Capt. Bird had despatched parties in several directions; one under 'Lieut. Barnard to the north shore of Barrow's Strait; a second, commanded by Lieut. Browne, to the east shore of Prince Regent's Inlet; and a third, conducted by Lieut. Robinson, along the western shore of that inlet. . . The latter . . . extended his examination . . . several miles to the southward of Fury Beach.'

"Although it was now but too evident, from no traces of the absent expedition having been met with, . . . that the ships could not have been detained anywhere in this part of the Arctic regions, yet I considered it proper to push forward to the westward, as soon as the ships should be liberated. . . My chief hopes now centred in the efforts of Sir John Richardson's party; but I felt fully persuaded that Sir John Franklin's ships must have *penetrated so far beyond* Melville Island, as to induce him to prefer making for the coast of America, rather than seeking assistance" from "Baffin's Bay." They got clear of Leopold Harbour on August 28th, and endeavoured to get to the westward, but were beset and frozen in on Sept. 1st, and drifted with the ice to the eastward, until abreast of Pond's Bay, when they were miraculously liberated, and returned to England. Thus ended the efforts of the first searching expedition sent to ascertain the whereabouts and to relieve our unfortunate countrymen, and upon whose successful efforts so much fond hope relied. We have often regretted that, notwithstanding the "hum-mocky" nature of the ice—but being fast—an attempt was not made to cross it to Cape Walker, instead of going south, as it would have saved much precious time. Had Franklin gone down Peel's Sound, he would have left notice of his having done so on the headlands at the entrance of that Sound, probably on its eastern side, but certainly on its western. Again, had he in going down it met with disaster, he would have discovered and crossed the narrow isthmus described by Sir James Ross, and have repaired to Fury Beach; but no traces being found at the latter, was proof that if he did go down Peel's Sound, no mishap had befallen him in his passage. And no traces being found on its eastern side, was good evidence that he did not attempt a passage that way at all. Still, as they might have passed down it on its western side, *not* crossing to Cape Walker to set this matter at rest, left the course and position of the Franklin Expedition as uncertain as ever.

Mention is made of "the western sea," west of Cresswell and Brentford Bays (?) and yet no notice is taken of the lands forming the western coast of Peel's Sound. They must have been visible

under the "peculiarly favourable" state of the atmosphere described; and if so, they should very much have abridged this expression of a "western sea."

He says, "I considered it proper to push forward to the westward." Why, it did not require any consideration; it was a duty. As to the persuasion that Franklin "must have penetrated so far beyond Melville Island as to induce him to prefer making for the American coast rather than seek assistance from the whalers in Baffin's Bay"—upon what ground is this persuasion founded? How did he get there?—by the north or south? It was to settle this, that this expedition was sent out; and failing to obtain additional information or farther clue to his position, this persuasion can only be considered as purely speculative. Altogether this was a most unfortunate voyage.

Sir J. Richardson returned, Nov. 7, 1849, from his examination of the Arctic shores of America between the Mackenzie and the Coppermine Rivers, already noticed. In the narrative of his proceedings, addressed to the Admiralty,* he again reverts to his former opinion as to the probable existence of a communication between Melville Sound and Coronation Gulf. He says, "The opening between Wollaston and Victoria Lands has always appeared to me to possess great interest; for through it the flood tide evidently sets into Coronation Gulf, diverging to the westward by the Dolphin and Union Straits, and to the eastward round Cape Alexander. By the fifth clause of Sir John Franklin's Instructions, he is directed to steer south-westward from Cape Walker, which would lead him nearly in the direction of the strait in question. If Sir John found Barrow's Strait open, as when Sir Edward Parry passed it on four previous occasions, I am convinced that (complying exactly as he could with his Instructions, *and without looking into the Wellington Sound, or other openings either to the south or north of Barrow's Strait*), he pushed *directly west to Cape Walker, and from thence south-westwards.*" If so, "the ships were probably shut up in some of the passages between Victoria, Banks', and Wollaston Lands. . . . This opinion, which I have advocated in my former communication, is rather strengthened by the laborious journeys of Sir James Ross, having discovered no traces of the missing ships." Sir John, being of opinion that this opening ought to be examined, says, "I determined to entrust this important service to Mr. Rae, who volunteered, and whose ability and zeal in the cause I cannot too highly commend."

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," pp. 1—8.

It will be seen that Sir John Richardson's views have undergone no change; after some very valuable observations on the amount of animal life in and about that region, and the duration of Franklin's provisions, and giving the example of Dr. Rae, who supported a party through a severe winter at Repulse Bay, he says, "Such instances forbid us to lose hope;" and alluding to the necessity of abandoning his ships, "they would endeavour to make their way *eastward to Lancaster Sound, or southward to the mainland*, according to the longitude in which the ships were arrested." Again he adds, "It is thought by some, whose opinion I highly value, that the discovery ships may have penetrated to the westward in so high a latitude, as not to come within sight of the mainland;" he therefore suggests "the examination of the western coasts of Banks' Land and the Parry Islands; but as this would require a ship expedition by way of Behring's Straits," he leaves the discussion of its practicability to the "officers who have navigated the northern seas," wisely confining his attention to the direction in which the ships had been sent, and not by a species of wild errantry, with reason or without, seek here, there, everywhere.

His memorandum to Dr. Rae is replete with sound sense; after stating his views (already given) as to the probable existence of a strait between Victoria and Wollaston Lands, and the necessity for its being searched, as being in the direction from which Sir John Franklin might be expected to emerge, and also as being in connection with Sir James Ross's parties from Melville Island and Banks' Land, he is directed to explore this supposed strait, and, if possible, to pursue his researches on to Banks' Land. It was now very important that the search should be made to the north-east, towards Cape Walker, through that blank formed by Cape Walker on the north-east, Banks' Land north-west, Wollaston Land south-west, and Victoria Land on the south-east; this blank or space had originated the plan of Sir John Barrow for the accomplishment of the passage, and to the equipment of the Franklin expedition to complete it. It would, as we have said, be meeting Franklin from Cape Walker, and Sir James Ross's parties in search of him from the north. The necessity was seen, and thus provided for. Dr. Rae was, too, to appropriate the summer of 1850, if necessary. This important task could not have been entrusted to a more efficient officer, as will be seen in the sequel.

Another expedition was now proposed by the hydrographer, Sir Francis Beaufort, by the way of Behring's Strait. The design was

to get to the northward and found Point Barrow, and from thence easterly, to endeavour to reach the west side of Banks' Land and Melville Island. It was supposed that Franklin, having got to the westward of Melville Island, was there locked up in the ice. The report of the hydrographer, conveying his reasons for coming to this conclusion, and the opinions of the various distinguished Arctic officers upon it, cannot be otherwise than interesting at this period of the search for our missing countryman. The hydrographer, in his report* (24th November, 1849), proposing this expedition to Behring's Strait, opens the subject by observing, "There are four ways only in which it is likely the *Erebus* and *Terror* would have been lost,—by fire, by sunken rocks, by storm, or by being crushed;" and after arguing and dismissing each as improbable, he says, "the point where they now are is the great matter for consideration. . . . Their orders would have carried them towards Melville Island, and *then out* to the *westward*, where it is, therefore, probable that they are entangled amongst the islands and ice. For should they have been arrested at some intermediate place, for instance, Cape Walker, or at one of the northern chain of islands, they would undoubtedly, in the course of the three following years, have contrived to send some notices of their position to the shores of North Somerset or of Barrow's Strait. If they had reached much to the southward of Banks' Land, they would have communicated with the tribes on the Mackenzie River; and if, failing to get to the westward and southward, they had returned, with the intention of penetrating through Wellington Channel, they would surely have detached parties . . . towards Barrow's Strait, in order to have deposited statements of their intentions. The general conclusion, therefore, remains, that they are still locked in the archipelago to the westward of Melville Island." After alluding to the alternating nature of the weather between the opposite sides of North America, the report concludes:—"An attempt should now be made by Behring's Strait, in the direction of Melville Island."

Sir Edward Parry (2nd December, 1849†) says, "With respect to the place in which these ships have been detained, we have no data on which to found any satisfactory conjecture beyond the fact, that in the attempt to get westward, . . . they have been too far removed from the continent of America to render a communication practicable; . . . but it seems to me likely that the ships have been pushing

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 74.

† *Ibid.*, p. 75.

. . . in the direction of Behring's Strait, and are detained somewhere in the *space* south-westward of Banks' Land. . . . Should . . . they have been unsuccessful in that direction, they may have attempted to proceed to the northward, either through Wellington Channel, or . . . some other of the openings among the same group of islands. . . . I do not myself *attach any superior importance to Wellington Channel* as regards the North-West Passage, but I understand that Sir John Franklin did, and that he strongly expressed to Lord Haddington his intention of attempting that route, if he should fail in effecting the more direct passage to the westward. . . . Under these circumstances, which . . . amount to no more than mere conjecture, it seems to me expedient still to prosecute the search in both directions, namely, by Behring's Strait (to which I look with the strongest hope), and also by Barrow's Strait. . . . In the latter direction, the difficulties with which Sir James Ross had to contend have, in reality, left us with very little more information than before he left England; and I cannot contemplate, without serious apprehension, leaving that opening without still further search, . . . in case of the missing crews having fallen back to the eastern coast of North Somerset, where they would naturally look for supplies, in addition . . . to those left by the *Fury*." Sir James Ross* (30th November, 1849):—"With respect to the probable position of the *Erebus* and *Terror*, I consider it is hardly possible they can be anywhere to the eastward of Melville Island, or within 300 miles of Leopold Island; for if that were the case, they would . . . have made their way to that point, with the hope of receiving assistance from the whale ships. . . . It is probable, therefore, that during their first summer, which was remarkably favourable for navigation in those seas, they have been enabled (in obedience to their orders) to push the ships to the westward of Banks' Land, and have there become involved in the heavy pack of ice, which was observed from Melville Island always to be setting past its westernmost point in a south-east direction, and from which pack they may not have been able to extricate their ships. . . . From such a position, retreat to the eastward would be next to impossible; whilst the journey to the Mackenzie River of comparatively easy accomplishment. . . . If this be assumed as the present position of the *Erebus* and *Terror*, it would manifestly be far more easy and safe to afford them relief by means . . . of Behring's Strait than any other direction."

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1860," p. 77.

Captain (the late lamented Admiral) Beechey (1st December, 1849*) agrees with Sir Francis Beaufort as regards "any casualties which Sir John's Franklin's ships may have sustained, . . . and entirely agrees with him and Sir Edward Parry that the expedition is probably hampered amongst the ice somewhere to the south-westward of Melville Island." He urges "every possible method of relief," by "Barrow's Strait, Behring's Strait, and the northern coast of America." He says, "Barrow's Strait should be visited in the ensuing summer."

Sir George Back (1st December, 1849†) agrees "with Sir Francis Beaufort in his general conclusion, that the ships are still locked up in the archipelago to the westward, . . . or I should rather say, in the neighbourhood . . . of Melville Island. . . . It becomes of the first importance to get at that locality." Sir George "rejects all and every idea of any attempt on the part of Sir John Franklin to send boats or detachments over the ice to any point of the mainland eastward of the Mackenzie River; because (he observes) I can say, from experience, that no toil-worn and exhausted party could have the least chance of existence by going there." He seems to think sending "two other ships" to Behring's Strait "superfluous." He continues:—"If open water should have allowed Sir John Franklin to have resorted to his boats, . . . he would make for either the Mackenzie River, or, which is far more likely, from the almost certainty he must have felt of finding provisions, Cape Clarence and Fury Point. . . . Finally, believing, with Sir Francis Beaufort, that the coast about Melville Island, including the south-west direction from Cape Walker and Wellington Channel, as well as the two points already mentioned, to be the most probable places of finding, or at least ascertaining beyond conjecture the fate of the expedition," he concludes by proposing that the *Enterprise* and *Investigator* should be despatched in that direction in March next.

Sir John Richardson, 1st December, 1849:‡—"It seems to me very desirable that the western shores . . . of Parry's Islands should be searched in a high latitude, in the manner proposed by the hydrographer. If the proposed expedition succeeds in establishing its winter quarters among these islands, parties detached over the ice may travel to the *eastward* and *south-eastward*, so as to cross the line of search which it is hoped Mr. Rae has been able to pursue in the

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 80.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

present summer, and thus to determine whether any traces of the missing ships exist in localities the most remote from Behring's Strait and Lancaster Sound, and from whence shipwrecked crews would find the greatest difficulty in travelling to any place where they could hope to find relief."

In offering some general remarks on the report of the hydrographer, and the opinions of the pre-named Arctic officers thereon, we would draw attention to the unanimity of their views as to the general westerly direction in which the Franklin Expedition should be sought for. Allusion is made to the passages between the northern chain of islands (Parry's) and to Wellington Channel, but only in a secondary sense, that is, in case of the expedition "failing to get to the *southward and westward*." All of them, in assuming Franklin to have abandoned his ships, "and seeking supplies" and safety, refer to Port Leopold and Fury Beach on the east, or to the Mackenzie River, or between it and Behring's Strait in the west; in all these conclusions acting obviously under a thorough knowledge and just sense of the plan of Sir John Barrow, and the Instructions founded upon it. But while admitting this, it must be observed the proposition and the opinions upon it differ very materially. The hydrographer concludes, that because they have not been heard of in Barrow's Strait, on the shores of North Somerset, or on the Mackenzie River, hence they must be to the westward of Melville Island, and yet does not suggest how they got there. This conclusion is hypothetical.

Sir Edward Parry thinks, with reason, they may be detained somewhere south-west of Banks' Land, but admits it is conjectural. He rejects the Wellington Channel; still would have both directions searched, that is, by the east and west.

Sir James Ross thinks it hardly possible that the ships can be to the eastward of Melville Island, or we should have heard of them through the whalers at Regent's Inlet; but that, in obedience to their orders, they pushed "to westward of Banks' Land," and are "involved" in the south-east drift he mentions as observed to be setting past the westernmost point of Melville Island. This apparent south-east drift would have set the ships into Melville Sound, or on to Banks' Land. Sir James has already referred to this easterly drift of the ice,* and the inevitable embarrassments consequent to the Franklin Expedition, if caught within its influence. Of the fact of

* See his Reply to Dr. King's Plan, Parliamentary Papers, No. 264, "Arctic Expedition," p. 45.

this drift there was no doubt; but in it do we not find one of the most powerful arguments that could be adduced in support of a thorough examination of Melville Sound, that blank which the Franklin Expedition was directed to explore, with the hope of finding within it a passage to the westward? How is it that no one has recommended *specially* the search of Melville Sound? However, upon this assumed position he argues;—retreat from it to the eastward is next to impossible, and therefore looks to the Mackenzie River. He says nothing as to how the ships got to the westward of Banks' Land, and into this south-east drift, whether by the north-west or south-west. Were the ships shut out from the south-west? and did they attempt "the Passage" by one of the westernmost channels between the Parry group, round by the north? or did they pass to the westward between Banks' Land and Melville Island (forbidden)? In either case all is assumed. Sir James Ross recommends the search by Behring's Strait.

Captain Beechey thinks the expedition is *south-west* of Melville Island. This we can comprehend by reference to Parry's chart, 1819. He may have passed to the south-west, between Banks' and Wollaston Lands; but Captain Beechey regards it as "probable" only, and even this probability arose out of the protracted absence of the expedition, for there were no new facts. He says every method of relief should be pushed forward from Barrow's and Behring's Straits, and by the coast of America; but he specially recommends an expedition by way of Barrow's Strait, in which he is joined by Sir George Back.

Sir George Back thinks the missing ships are in the neighbourhood of Melville Island, and, seemingly, *not westward of it*. He does not agree with his colleagues in recommending other vessels to be sent to Behring's Strait, but proposes an expedition by *Barrow's Strait*. His views are evidently fixed solely on the *south-west direction* from *Cape Walker*. We fully concur in this expression of Sir George Back's; he seems to feel the fact that nothing had been done towards searching the area to which the Franklin Expedition was directed, and that it was imperative that it should be done, and at once.

Sir John Richardson thinks the western shores of the Parry archipelago should be searched in a high latitude, but that the parties should be sent in an *east and south-east direction*, crossing the line of search of Dr. Rae. He obviously looks to Melville Sound and its vicinity, a direction perfectly in accordance with Franklin's Instructions. The *large westing* assigned to the expedition is easily accounted for, when we consider the known energy and daring of Sir John

Franklin and his able officers and crews, the desire to push on, their long absence, and the entire want of intelligence or traces to the eastward in Barrow's Strait. But how did he get to the westward of Melville Island, that a searching expedition should look for him in that direction? It could only be by the north: we had no proof of this—all was conjecture—we had not been enabled even to ascertain the first fact, whether he had reached Cape Walker (or its meridian); or, having reached there, whether he had gone to the southward or the westward. This should have been first determined. It will have been observed that two of the Arctic authorities give the preference to the search by Barrow's rather than Behring's Straits. The supposition that he had attempted the route of the Wellington Channel, before this was ascertained, was altogether absurd; out of the question in a reasonable point of view, and quite at variance with the Instructions.

There is yet one observation: it is singular that while the advocates for the Behring's Strait Expedition have speculated more or less on the western limits of Melville Island and Banks' Land, without knowing their extent westward, no one has ventured to express any opinion of the *northern limits of Victoria or Wollaston Lands, or the eastern extreme of Banks' Land*, excepting Sir John Richardson: he, seeking for the origin of the flood tide known to come from the eastward, down Dolphin and Union Straits, imagines a passage to exist between Wollaston and Victoria Lands. Now, looking at the position of Melville or Parry's Sound, between Cape Walker and Banks' Land, it would seem natural that its southern limits should have drawn inquiry, and we think, *should have had marked attention*; but no, it is shunned: this is much to be regretted, as within that deeply important space ever has and will be centred all our thoughts and hopes of the toils, the daring, the enterprise, and the safety, of the Franklin Expedition. To return: in the end it was resolved by the Admiralty to send an expedition to Behring's Strait; from thence eastward to Banks' Land and Melville Island; in reality to make a north-east passage from Behring's Strait. By this route it was hoped the long absent navigators would be met, *whether they had made good a passage from Cape Walker to the south-west, or having gained large western longitude by the north of Melville Island, had come down to the westward of it; so far, it was good.*

1849.—The secretary of the Admiralty, in a letter to the secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company, dated Dec. 22nd, 1849,* in ignorance

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1848," pp. 44-7 et 53.

of the point which Dr. Rae may have attained last summer, "and of the means he may yet have left at his command, it is difficult to say to what special points it would be wise to direct Dr. Rae's well-known energy, or the generous disposition of the Hudson's Bay Company. It would, no doubt, be most desirable that Dr. Rae should again proceed to the northward of Victoria Island (Land); and though varying his route, yet always endeavouring to approach Banks' Land and Melville Island; but my Lords consider that the safest and surest thing that can be done is to request the Hudson's Bay Company to authorize him to do the utmost that he can accomplish with safety to himself . . . to further the great object in view; and to let him be guided by his own experience and judgment. . . . If all further efforts afloat are beyond his reach, then the expedition proposed . . . to the westward of the Mackenzie River, and the establishment of a communication with the Russians and the Esquimaux, would be well worth any expense attending it. . . . Their Lordships therefore request that the . . . Hudson's Bay Company will give the requisite orders, and the Government will pay the necessary expense incurred."

The necessary orders were forwarded to Sir George Simpson, Dec. 28th, 1849, and a letter was also written to the Governor of the Russian American colonies at Sitka, requesting his co-operation.

Sir George Simpson (January 21st, 1850), giving instructions to Dr. Rae, says, "You will observe that the opinion in England appears to be that our explorations ought to be more particularly directed to that portion of the northern sea lying between *Cape Walker on the east, Melville Island and Banks' Land to the north, and the continental shore, or the Victoria Islands, to the south,*" as these limits are believed to embrace the course that would have been pursued by Sir John Franklin. Our object in noticing these letters is to show,—the first point of the Instructions given to the Franklin Expedition was quite understood—the north of Barrow's Strait and of the Parry Islands is not mentioned.

Mr. John Christophers, Dec. 4th, 1849,* suggested to the Admiralty a plan for reaching the Pole from Smith's Sound. However wild and imaginary it may seem at first sight, Mr. Christophers offers many valuable suggestions for travelling parties. But the portion we have to do with is the course Franklin pursued, and the search to be made for his recovery. He says, "as the distance from Melville Island

* Blue Book, "Arctic Expedition, 1852," p. 133.

near Icy Cape is only about 750 geographical miles, I respectfully suggest, that the *Enterprise* and *Investigator* should go to Melville Island," and if Sir John Franklin's ships be not found there, he recommends his mode for searching by travelling parties; this gentleman looks to the south and west, the true direction.

Captain Wm. Penny, well known for his experience acquired over twenty-eight years of service in the northern whale fishery, at this time offered his services, to search by the way of Baffin's Bay. In a letter to the Admiralty, dated Dec. 22, 1849,* he proposes to examine Jones' Sound, and obtain through it "an earlier passage . . . into Wellington Strait;" thoroughly to examine it, "since, if Sir John Franklin has taken that route with the hope of finding a passage westward to the north of the Parry and Melville Islands, he may be beyond the power of helping himself. No trace of the expedition, or practical communication with Wellington Strait, being obtained in this quarter," he "would proceed to Lancaster Sound, with the view of proceeding to the west, and entering Wellington Strait; or, if this should not be practicable, of proceeding farther westward to Cape Walker, and beyond," and "commence the search westward and northward the ensuing year." This plan, it will be seen, embraces the north-west, the west, and south-west, a wide range of coast for search in such a fettered climate, for the adoption of which Capt. Penny offers no specific reasons; all his arguments are founded on the very doubtful position, "*If Sir John Franklin has taken that route.*" We do not agree with him that "Sir John Franklin may have gone in several other directions," nor with this conclusion, "for one seems just as probable as another." These assertions go to prove nothing as to the course the expedition pursued; but they do rather prove the erroneous opinions entertained at the time. Here is another instance of the errors that may and do arise from unrestrained thought. If Captain Penny had read the only fact we had for our guidance, *i. e.*, if he had read with attention and without prejudice the Instructions given to Sir John Franklin, he never could reasonably have imagined that he took a north-west course, unless under the circumstances pointed out by Section 6, which left him no alternative but to take that direction. His orders commanded him specially "not to stop to examine the openings north and south of him," but "to push on to Cape Walker, and from thence in a south-west direction." But if "*arrested by ice of a permanent appearance,*" he had then the option

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," pp. 133-4.

of taking the Wellington Channel route. Now we are bound to infer, Franklin would make Cape Walker his first great object; and in the absence of all intelligence, we are equally bound to conclude that he was successful; in short, we had not a particle of evidence to prove to the contrary, then why seek him in the north? We perceive Capt. Penny mentions Cape Walker as the last for examination—why, it should have been the first. Why should the intent of the Instructions be thus inversed? The tendencies shown in this case, as in others already given, prove that the ill-judged importance attached to the sounds and passages north of Barrow's Strait by some of the Arctic authorities are acquiring a widespread, and, we fear, a disastrous influence. That Capt. Penny possessed all the qualifications of a seaman; that his experience was perfect as a commander amid the perils of ice navigation, there is no doubt; that his motives and feelings were in the humane cause, and highly honourable to him, is not questioned; still something more than these were required. With the knowledge of the vexed question, and particularly the original plan of Sir John Barrow, to daring and a love of enterprise, a calm, cool judgment was required, where ebullition of feeling and visionary conclusions held no sway. The hydrographer, in a memorandum on this plan,* noticing "the daring but prudent conduct Mr. Penny is said to have evinced on many occasions, together with his large experience, . . . gained during a whole life among the ice, . . . thinks it would be wise to let loose his energy." But did it never occur to those, advising in these matters, that this plan offered but slight hope for giving relief to the missing expedition? it therefore might fail of its object, and failing, time would be lost, time finite; and it lost, death to Franklin and his gallant officers might ensue. Calm reason and sober truth once left, we stray in endless error!

During this year (1849), the Behring's Strait Expedition, *Herald* and *Plover*, under the direction of that excellent officer, Capt. Henry Kellett, and his able second, Commander Moore, became completely organized. The *Plover*, a bad sailer, had not effected a meeting with the *Herald* until July 15th, 1849. Her voyage from England had been so protracted, that she was compelled to winter on the Asiatic side in a harbour since called Emma Harbour, near Tchutskoi Noss.

Various were the offers of service during the year; to blow up the

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 184.

ice at ten or fifteen miles per day* by Mr. G. Shepherd, C.E.; to explore by means of balloons, by Lieut. Gale, &c.

It would be untrue to say the Admiralty were not at this time fully impressed with the importance of sending immediate relief, if possible, to the unhappy Franklin and his unfortunate companions; they were doing all that a fond country, anxious for its long absent sons, could do; but the conflicting nature of the advice tendered will, we fear, perplex, if it does not confound, their best intentions.

CHAPTER VII

NEW YEAR SAD BUT ACTIVE—NEW PLANS: M'CORMICK, S. OSBORN, JOHN BOSS, LADY FRANKLIN—OFFERS OF SERVICE FROM CHARLES REID, REV. J. WOLFF, B. A. GOODSIE—COLLINSON AND M'CLURE SAIL — INSTRUCTIONS — HYDROGRAPHER'S NEW PROPOSAL VIA HARROW'S STRAIT—OPINIONS: HAMILTON, PARRY, SABINE, BACK, RICHARDSON—REMARKS—LADY FRANKLIN AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA—PLANS OF W. SNOW, M'LEAN, S. OSBORN.

1850.—The new year opened oppressive with gloom and fearful anticipations of disaster and suffering to the missing expedition, and yet there was an activity of mind pervading all ranks, a firm resolve to save if possible. Legion were the gallant hearts offering service in a cause so noble, so holy and humane. It would be vain here to describe the deep anguish and anxiety for the missing ones in their homes at this period, of mothers, fathers, wives, and children; and the profound solicitude of the public. Hope had not altogether expired, but it flickered between the extremes, life and death. She had not departed, and the forlorn and drooping still clung to her. The three years for which the ships were provisioned were now expired, and terrible visions of protracted misery and starvation forced themselves on the minds of all; still the ships and crews were considered safe; the full provisions of three years might by prudence be lengthened out to five; it was hoped, too, the animal life of the land and the sea of those regions, so abundant in parts already known, even yet farther to the north than the locality in which they were supposed to be ice-bound, would yield to the gallant missing ones sufficient to sustain life until relief should arrive: but then, again, during the five years they had been away not a trace of their movements had been discovered! It is true nothing, or little or nothing, had been done, and deeply, deeply was it deplored that Sir James Ross's expedition had been so completely a failure; much was it regretted that he had not attempted to get west, and endeavour to reach Cape Walker from North Somerset, instead of going south to a quarter where it was scarcely probable the expedition would be found; for had Franklin attempted that passage, he would have been safe, as he could then

have made known his position by notices at Cape Leopold or other headlands, and found provisions at Fury Beach. Two years were considered wholly lost. Cape Walker had yet to be reached, the threshold to be examined before we might expect any positive information as to whether the expedition had or had not reached *so far west* as it, or had been crushed in the middle ices of Baffin's Bay, as painfully asserted by unfeeling rumour.

Dr. M'Cormick (1st January, 1850) submitted another plan to the Admiralty,* for search by the Wellington Channel, &c.; alluding to his previous plan, the search up "Jones's and Smith's Sounds," and the deep interest attached to Wellington Channel, which he says he should have comprised within" his plan, "had not H.M.S. *Enterprise* and *Investigator* been employed at the time in Barrow's Strait for the express purpose of examining *this inlet* and *Cape Walker*, two of the most essential points of search in the whole track of the *Erebus* and *Terror* to the westward; being those points at the very threshold of his enterprise, from which Sir John Franklin would take his departure from the known to the unknown, whether he shaped a south-westerly course from the latter, or attempted a passage in a high latitude from the former point. . . . The return of the sea expedition from Port Leopold . . . unsuccessful, . . . the case stands precisely as it did two years ago; the work has yet to be begun." He adds his belief, "that Sir John Franklin's ships have been arrested in a high latitude, and beset . . . northward of the Parry Islands. Their probable course thither has been through the Wellington Channel, or one of the sounds at the northern extremity of Baffin's Bay. . . . This appears to me to be the only view of the case that can in any way account for the entire absence of all tidings of them throughout so protracted a period of time. . . . Isolated . . . their position would be under such circumstances. . . . Had Sir John Franklin been enabled to shape a south and westerly course from Cape Walker, as directed by his Instructions, the probability is, some intelligence of him would have reached this country ere this . . . either in the direction of the coast of America, or Barrow's Strait, . . . or Esquimaux would have been fallen in with and tidings . . . obtained. . . . Failing to penetrate beyond Cape Walker, Sir John Franklin would have left some notice of his future intentions on that spot or the nearest accessible one to it; and should he then retrace his course for the Wellington Channel (the most

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 124.

probable conjecture), he would not pass up that inlet without depositing a farther account of his proceedings." Dr. M'Cormick concludes by volunteering to examine the Wellington Channel, the western coast of North Devon and Cornwallis Islands. Jones's Sound not to be omitted. Enclosed with this plan is the opinion of Sir Edward Parry;* he says, "Among the probabilities to which we are now driven there is none more likely than that Sir John Franklin may have tried some one of those inlets, *after failing in Lancaster Sound*. . . I do think it would be worth while to let you have a boat to make the attempt."

The hydrographer, Sir Francis Beaufort, in a note appended to this plan, says :—"Dr. McCormick has shown so much heart and perseverance in urging his project for relief, . . . that there can be no doubt he would execute it with commensurable zeal and resolution, and though it does not appear to me that Jones's Sound or Wellington Channel are the most likely places to find the ships, yet in the fifth year of their absence *every place should be searched*."

Dr. McCormick clearly understands the plan and object of Sir John Franklin's Expedition; altogether, his reasoning is excellent, but the arguments are founded on the supposition that, because of the protracted absence of the expedition, and no tidings being heard of it, hence it must be to the north, in a high latitude. Now this wanted proof. The case stood as he says it did "two years before;" indeed, as it stood after Franklin left the whalers in 1845. The absence of information could not alter it; it was "as problematical as ever;" the instructions, therefore, were equally binding upon us now as then. We had done nothing, although five years had nearly elapsed. We had not sought for intelligence where it could be obtained, *i. e.*, on the route in which he was sent. At this time Franklin may have reached Cape Walker, and cairns may have been erected and despatches deposited there, but as *WE had not reached it*, of course we were ignorant of their existence. Again, as to the American coast; although success had not rewarded the arduous efforts of the indefatigable Sir John Richardson and Dr. Rae (sent with the hope of meeting him emerging from the north-east), still, could not conjecture spare a thought on this, and question, Might there not exist causes preventing Franklin making known his position, either by the American coast or Barrow's Strait? as we shall show anon. At this time, then, there was no reason for the conclusion that he

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," pp. 123-5.

had gone up Wellington Channel, or by any outlet, sound, or passage north of Barrow's Strait (or 74° north), between "Melville Island on the west and the great sound at the head of Baffin's Bay on the east." Had we been certain that Franklin was shut out from Cape Walker, then Wellington Channel might have offered a point for attention; but even then, only under consideration, for although unable to get to Cape Walker from ice, &c., still the south-west over 17° of longitude was before him; he might still have persevered to make *westing* along the parallel of 74° north, and *southing* where he could; and in the course of doing this he may have attained such large westing, as to make it questionable whether it were not better still to persevere in that direction; or, being foiled near Banks' Land (but east of it), have taken advantage of one of the western passages to the north, between the Parry Islands, rather than to return to the eastward and attempt the ascent of that doubtful (because unknown) passage, the Wellington Channel; "no one knew where it would lead." There was and is only one condition of things that could at all make the Wellington Channel probable, and that is—having positively ascertained that all outlet to the south and west was impracticable by *the existence of insurmountable obstacles from ice, extending from Cornwallis Island across to North Somerset, presenting a bar to all advance in that direction.* Even then we must presume that Wellington Channel was "open, and free from ice," ready to receive and offer him a navigable passage to the north. Under such circumstances, he might have passed up it; but all these we had yet to learn. Wellington Channel, the northern passages, and the great sounds, have received prominent notice; but all the reasoning is purely imaginative, and, therefore, baseless. We repeat, we fear the preponderating influence of these channels and sounds; they are opposed to the letter of Franklin's Instructions, and may lead to disappointment, if not fatal results.

Lieut. Sherard Osborn, R.N. (4th January, 1850), submitted a plan and offer of service to the Admiralty: * "A second attempt to reach Sir John Franklin being about to be tried, I take the liberty of calling your attention to the inclosed proposition for an overland party to be despatched to the shores of the Polar Sea, with a view to their traversing the short distance (801 miles) between Cape Bathurst and Banks' Land." The reasons assigned are:—"General opinion places the expedition to the west of Cape Walker, and south of the

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 120.

latitude of Melville Island. . . . Every mile traversed northward by a party from Cape Bathurst would be over that unknown space in which traces of Franklin may be expected. . . . The proposed expedition would carry into execution a very important clause in the Instructions given to Sir James Ross, viz., that of sending exploring parties from Banks' Land in a south-westerly direction towards Capes Bathurst and Parry."

The necessity for an expedition in this direction had already been anticipated by Sir John Richardson, as has been already noticed, in the unsuccessful attempt in the summer of 1849 by Dr. Rae. His object was to reach the opening (a supposed strait) between Victoria and Wollaston Lands, and thence north to Banks' Land. He did not succeed; but intended to renew the attempt in the summer of 1850. The Admiralty Instructions subsequently directed the course of the expedition more westward to Cape Bathurst, and thence to Banks' Land, and this service was confided to Commander Pullen.

Lady Franklin, 13th January, 1850,* inclosed to the Secretary of the Admiralty various communications addressed to herself, containing offers of service from Captain Charles Reid, brother of the ice-master of the *Erebus*, and from the Rev. Joseph Wolff, of Bokhara celebrity, and subsequently one from Mr. R. A. Goodsir, brother of the assistant-surgeon of the *Erebus*. Neither of these communications offer any views as to the course and position of the Franklin Expedition.

Sir John Ross (14th January, 1850)† offered the "outline of a plan for affording relief to the Franklin Expedition," addressed to the Admiralty. We dismiss all preamble about the means to be employed; we have to do with the *direction* only. The expedition is to "call at Leopold Harbour, and thence to proceed to the western cape of Wellington Channel, where probably the first intelligence of Sir John Franklin may be found; and subsequently, according to circumstances, proceed to visit the headlands between it and Melville Island. . . . If necessary, to proceed to Banks' Land. . . . If no intelligence of" the "expedition is found at the different positions in Barrow's Strait, small parties . . . of an officer and two men must be detached in every direction likely to find the missing ships." Sir John Ross is decidedly of opinion, that with "this" plan he could perform this important service during the summer and autumn months, and concludes, "I have no hesitation in pledging

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 135.

† *Ibid.*, p. 115.

my word that I shall return in October next, after having decided the fate of Sir John Franklin and his devoted companions."

In reviewing this plan, we would observe that no objection can be taken to examining the headlands at the entrance (east and west) of Wellington Channel; but without absolute information that the Franklin Expedition had been altogether shut out from Cape Walker and the west and south, an extended search up that channel we considered, at the time (and of course now), mere chance-work: nearly the same observation may be applied to the headlands between it and Melville Island. But why not have examined the headlands or sea on the south, between Cape Walker and Banks' Land? Surely there the hope of finding the expedition was certain, for to that quarter Franklin was sent. Had the author of this plan ever read Franklin's Instructions? There are nine memoranda inclosed with this plan, as to Sir John Ross's "peculiar claims" for this service, two only of which apply here. "No. 2. As being the only officer who actually promised to search for Sir John Franklin, in the event of his not returning in 1847. . . . 3rd. Having had communication with Sir John Franklin touching the positions in which he may be found."

As to the promise, no one seems to have known that it was made; still it may have been made between the two gallant officers (?); but as regards the communication "touching positions in which he (Franklin) may be found," we may remark, why did Sir John Ross not make them known to the Admiralty, that they might be taken advantage of, and the rescue of this unhappy expedition be made certain? but we do not find any notice of them, either in any of Sir John Ross's letters or plans, and therefore they rest on mere assertion, which the plans themselves, by their vagueness, go to disprove. Their lordships do not seem, by their reply (dated 22nd January, 1850), to enter on Sir John Ross's views, for they say, "Further search from the eastward has not yet been determined upon."

The result of the hydrographer's proposition, and the opinions expressed upon it (already given), was the fitting out and despatch of the *Enterprise*, Captain Collinson, and the *Investigator*, Commander M'Clure, for the search to the north-east by way of Behring's Strait. They sailed from Plymouth 20th January, 1850. The essence of the Instructions upon which these enterprising officers were directed to proceed may be comprised in a sentence:—"Section 16. We leave it to your judgment and discretion as to the course to be pursued after passing Point Barrow"—sufficiently brief and unfettered; but we

ought to remark, great care is shown in these Instructions for the safety of this expedition, by the general excellent arrangements for communication with the *Herald* and *Plover*, and for depôts to fall back upon. Captain Collinson was farther aided by valuable memoranda from Sir Edward Parry, Captain Beechey, and Sir John Richardson; to those who feel an interest in Arctic exploration these offer most interesting matter for perusal.*

The object of this expedition was to search, not only the northern coast of America, but also the western coasts of Wollaston and Banks' Lands, Melville Island, Victoria Land, and the passages between, on the assumption that Franklin had made large westing, all of which was mere conjecture, arising out of long absence; but how he got there, whether by the south-west from Cape Walker, or by the north, no sound reason could be offered. Why not, then, have searched Melville Sound?

About this time various excellent letters, exciting to renewed search, appeared, "By an Observer."† In these a retrospect is taken of the whole plan of the Franklin Expedition and the past search; the conduct of the Admiralty, the Royal, and the Royal Geographical Societies are reviewed, and not always with candour; bold language is used, and assertions hazarded not always in keeping with facts; still their object was to spur the public and the Government to the rescue, and so far good. "Observer" suggests the following plan:—"Six whale-boats to be procured at Boston, and forty persons, seamen and officers, as the relieving party, divided into three brigades of two boats each. To this party should be attached another of forty men and officers, with six or eight canoes, the men being hunters and Canadian voyageurs, and they, likewise, should be divided into three brigades. Having obtained full instructions for every aid to be afforded to them by the Hudson's Bay Company's servants, the united brigades might push, in March or April (or earlier or later, according to circumstance), to the Great Slave Lake; thence, one brigade should strike to the north-east, down the Back or Great Fish River, to the Polar Sea. The other two brigades . . . down the Mackenzie and Great Bear Lake; one of them might turn off, cross the lake, and endeavour to reach the Coppermine River, following it down to the sea. The remaining brigade down the Mackenzie,

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," pp. 89—84.

† Letters "On the Relief of Sir John Franklin's Expedition. By an Observer." Pamphlet, published by Saunders, Charing Cross.

to its mouth. These three parties having reached the Polar shores, they should each choose a wintering spot. . . . The whale-boat parties, either on foot over the ice, or in their boats, according to the state of the sea, proceed in the following directions :—the Back River party in a north-north-west course, after passing Dease and Simpson's Straits. The Coppermine party towards the north-north-east, towards Cape Walker, Dr. Rae having been instructed to take his party due north to Banks' Land. The Mackenzie River division to make a northerly course, until it intersect the line which, it is supposed, the expedition of Captain Collinson from Cape Barrow will make in steering for Melville Island. I cannot conceive," the author says, "that the whole of such a plan could miscarry. . . . In the year 1851, a fresh party might be sent, to re-provision, reinforce, or assist them . . . homeward."

We cannot view the plan before us with much favour. It involves the employment of too large a number of men; and it is questionable if so large a party could be provided for by the Hudson's Bay Company without long previous notice, the ground to be traversed is of great extent, and too remote from their stations. As to carrying their own stores over such a country and for so large a party, we think any attempt to do so would only impair their efficiency for action on their arrival on the shores of the Polar Sea, if not impracticable. The policy of wintering on those bleak shores we much question. Then, as to the directions of search, we do not see the advantage of sending a party from the Mackenzie in a "northerly course;" again, the ground eastward of the Mackenzie—Wollaston and Victoria Lands—was already occupied by Dr. Rae, and was soon to receive additional examination by Commander Pullen; the ships, too, under Captain Collinson would explore the western and southern shore of Melville Island, Banks', Wollaston, and Victoria Lands. The Coppermine party to Cape Walker might be of advantage, and so might the Back River party, if they could extend their search far enough in the directions indicated; but over unknown ground there always will arise the question whether it is land or sea, and if practicable. We therefore must doubt if any great good would result from either.

The Lords of the Admiralty,* availing themselves of a proposal of the Hudson's Bay Company to send a despatch to the Mackenzie, forwarded a letter to Lieutenant (now Commander) Pullen (dated 25th January, 1850). In it they observe :—"Viewing the possible

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition," pp. 47—57.

opportunity which your position may afford of a search being made from Cape Bathurst towards Banks' Land, my Lords are pleased to convey to you their sanction for your prosecuting such a search.

. . . The Hudson's Bay Company have been requested to instruct Mr. Rae to afford you his best advice and assistance, if you should fall in with him." With this was inclosed a copy of a letter from Sir John Richardson, containing his views on the subject; they embrace the time for starting, river routes, boats, provisions, &c. : also extracts from a letter from Dr. Scoresby (2nd January, 1850), from which we note, "It does not appear to me that the examination of the region or channel proximate to Wollaston Land and Victoria Land (as designed, I believe, for Dr. Rae) will comprise all that seems desirable, but that a party (a small one would do) issuing from the Mackenzie towards and *beyond Cape Bathurst, in the direction of Banks' Land*, would perform a most important service in a great and well-laid plan.

. . . This line of search seems to afford as good a prospect of crossing the track of the missing expedition as almost any other in contemplation." Enclosed also were memoranda from a paper by Lieutenant S. Osborn, R.N., 4th January, 1850 (see page 114).

These letters prove the existence of a strong feeling that Sir John Franklin was expected to have, at least, endeavoured to fulfil the first point of his Instructions; and more, that he had succeeded in making a general south-west course from Cape Walker. Considering the time that had elapsed since his departure (nearly five years), still to cling to the intent of the Instructions, induces the question, Why not search from the east by Barrow's Strait, from Cape Walker, in a south and west direction?

We shall now turn to the eastern opening. The search by Barrow's Strait was too important to be neglected; it was the direction in which the Franklin Expedition was ordered, and the Admiralty wisely entered upon the subject at once. The last expedition in this direction had failed altogether, as regards the west and south from Cape Walker; we were, therefore, nearly in the same position as before Sir James Ross's expedition sailed, with this exception—no traces having been found on the western coast of North Somerset, it led to the inference that the Franklin Expedition had not passed down Peel Sound. This was scarcely likely, unless under peculiar circumstances, at any time, as Franklin's route was more to the westward, but less probable in this instance, as the season of 1846 was by all considered favourable for getting to the westward, and reaching the first point of his Instructions. It proved only that Sir John

Franklin had not communicated with the *western* shores of North Somerset.

Five years had now passed over since Franklin sailed, years of painful anxiety. Procrastination was fraught with danger—danger imminent. Again the able hydrographer (still looking to the Instructions and to the south-west) proposed another expedition through Baffin's Bay and Lancaster Sound: the opening of the proposition is worthy the humane and experienced Sir Francis Beaufort* (date 29th January, 1850).

Section 1. "The Behring's Straits expedition being fairly off, it appears to me to be a duty to submit to your lordships that no time should now be lost in equipping another set of vessels to renew the search . . . through Baffin's Bay. . . . This search should be so complete and effectual as to leave unexamined no place in which, by any of the suppositions that have been put forward, it is likely they may be found.

2. "Sir John Franklin is not a man to treat his orders with levity, and therefore his first attempt was undoubtedly made in the direction of *Melville Island*, and not to the westward. If foiled in that attempt, he naturally hauled to the southward, and, using Banks' Land as a barrier against the northern ice, he would try to make westing under its lee. If both of these roads were closed against his advance, he perhaps availed himself of one of the four passages between the Parry Islands, including the Wellington Channel; or, lastly, he may have returned to Baffin's Bay, and taken the inviting opening of Jones's Sound.

3. "All these four tracks must be diligently examined before the search can be called complete.

7. "Whatever vessels may be chosen, I would beseech their lordships to *expedite them*. *All our attempts have been deferred too long*.

9. "As the Council of the Royal Society some time since thought proper to remind their lordships of the propriety of renewing this search, it would be fair now to call on that learned body for all the advice and suggestions that science and philosophy can contribute towards the accomplishment of the great object on which the eyes of all England, and indeed of all the world, are now entirely fixed."

This report, with memoranda by Capt. W. A. B. Hamilton, Secretary of the Admiralty, led to a conference; and the following opinions were given by Sir Edward Parry, Sir George Back, Capt. Beechey, Sir John Richardson, and Col. Sabine.

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 98.

Capt. Hamilton, February 5th, 1850, says, "With reference to Sir F. Beaufort's memorandum, it may be useful to advert to certain papers before the Board relative to the eastern search (*vid* Barrow's Strait), and he refers to three papers in particular. Mr. Hamilton, brother-in-law of the eminent Dr. Rae, writing from Stromness (November 15th, 1849), affirms positively, that 'on the day previous to his sailing from that place . . . Sir J. Franklin expressed his determination to endeavour to find a passage to the westward through Alderman Jones's Sound. To this observation Capt. Hamilton, after justly observing, 'Sir John Franklin is as little likely as any man to deviate from his orders,' thinks 'it quite possible that' he 'may in conversation have referred to Jones's Sound, and that Mr. Hamilton has construed his mentioning Jones's Sound in a *conditional* sense as an *un*-conditional statement of his intention.' Capt. Hamilton then refers 'to other papers, tending to show what the opportunities are which Jones's Sound offers.' "

"Captain Penny, in the offer of his services to the Admiralty, December 22nd, 1849, says, 'If an early passage be obtained, I would examine Jones's Sound, as I have generally found . . . clear water at the mouth of that sound, . . . and there is a probability that an entire passage by this route might be found to Wellington Channel.'

"Capt. Gravill, in his letter, January 25, 1850, suggests 'Jones's and Smith's Sounds, together with other quarters, as points of search.' Capt. Lee, an experienced commander, reports his having 'mistaken Jones's Sound in thick weather for Lancaster Sound;' that he 'sailed 100 miles up the sound without meeting obstruction of any sort;' and that, 'in running out of the sound the carpenter . . . observed a cairn of stones on one of the headlands.' * 'Admitting, therefore,' says Capt. Hamilton, 'the utmost desire of Sir John Franklin to follow his orders, . . . he may have found a literal compliance with them impossible; and their purport being to push to the westward, he would naturally take the next means of doing so, *if the first failed*; and if, on arriving off Lancaster Sound, he found obstruction, . . . he would most probably make the attempt by Jones's Sound. . . . Sir John Franklin being well aware that both Jones's and Smith's Sounds have always given promise of open water, . . . it may therefore be considered that there are sufficient grounds for a specific

* Blue Books, "Arctic Expedition, 1852." See letter from his son, p. 128. It was not Jones's Sound, but another deep inlet, in 74° 40', or 75°, he entered—a pretty authority!

search of Jones's and Smith's Sounds.' He adds, 'With respect to any expedition . . . by the way of Lancaster Sound, Capt. Penny's may be difficult to improve upon.' Capt. Gravill's letter also offers some useful suggestions. In the paper by Dr. McCormick, great stress is laid upon 'the necessity of a search by Jones's Sound.'"

We will now quote the opinions of various Arctic officers on the plan proposed by the hydrographer.

Sir Edward Parry (February 6th, 1850), says,* "I am decidedly of opinion that the main search should be renewed in the direction of Melville Island and Banks' Land, including as a part of the plan the thorough examination of Wellington Strait and of the other similar openings between the islands of the group bearing my name. I entertain a growing conviction of the probability of the missing ships, or a portion of the crews, being shut up at Melville Island, Banks' Land, or in that neighbourhood, agreeing with Sir F. Beaufort, that 'Sir John Franklin is not a man to treat his orders with levity;' which he would be justly chargeable with doing if he attached greater weight to any notions he might personally entertain than to the Admiralty Instructions, which he well knew to be founded on the experience of former attempts, and on the best information that could then be obtained on the subject. For these reasons I can scarcely doubt he would employ two seasons, those of 1845 and 1846, in an unremitting attempt to penetrate directly westward or south-westward, towards Behring's Strait," and "having penetrated, in seasons of ordinary temperature, a considerable distance in that direction, have been locked up by successive seasons of extraordinary rigour, thus baffling the efforts of their weakened crews to escape," either "by Behring's or Barrow's Straits. My conviction of this probability has been greatly strengthened by a letter I have lately received from Col. Sabine. . . It must be admitted, however, that considerable weight is due to the conjecture, . . . offered by persons capable of forming a sound judgment, *that having failed. . . to penetrate westward*, Sir John Franklin might deem it prudent to retrace his steps; and was enabled to do so (?) in order to try a more northern route, either through Wellington Channel or some other of those openings between the Parry Islands; and this idea receives importance from the fact, said to be beyond doubt, of Sir John Franklin having . . . expressed such an intention in case of failing to get to the westward . . . I cannot, therefore, consider the intended

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," pp. 102-3.

search complete, without making the examination of Wellington Strait and its adjacent openings a distinct part of the plan. . . . Much stress has likewise been laid "on "Jones's and Smith's Sounds," and "considerable interest has been attached to Jones's Sound. . . . From the fact of its having been recently navigated, . . . and found of great width, free from ice, with a swell from the westward, . . . and no land visible . . . in that direction," it "may be found to communicate with Wellington Strait; so that if Sir John Franklin's ships have been detained anywhere to the northward of the Parry Islands it would be by Jones's Sound that he would probably endeavour to effect his escape, rather than by the less direct route of Barrow's Strait. I do not attach much importance to the idea of his having so far retraced his steps as to come through Lancaster Sound and recommence . . . by entering Jones's Sound." Sir Edward notices the "somewhat vague report . . . of a cairn of stones" seen by a whaler, and thinks it "expedient to set this question at rest by a search in that direction, including the examination of Smith's Sound." Sir Edward recommends the examination, by two vessels, of "Wellington Strait, . . . and the adjacent openings between the Parry Islands, . . . and then to endeavour to ascertain the connection with Jones's Sound," and of it "with Baffin's Bay." "Two other vessels should push . . . towards Melville Island and Banks' Land, . . . carefully searching the southern shores of the Parry Islands;" he "thinks Capt. Penny might be advantageously employed in the examination of Jones's and Smith's Sounds," and that "Dr. McCormick's plan, for searching by boats, might form a useful . . . appendage to this branch of the expedition. He concludes, "What I have now proposed, when taken into consideration with the efforts of Capt. Collinson from the west, and those of Dr. Rae and Commander Pullen from the south, will complete a concentration of search (so to speak) in the direction of Banks' Land and Melville Island, *which I believe to constitute our best hopes of success.*"

Col. Sabine, in a confidential letter to Sir Edward Parry (January 15th, 1850,* and which he refers to in the preceding opinion), declares his views fully, from which we extract:—"There can be little doubt, I imagine, in the mind of any one who has read attentively Franklin's Instructions, and, in reference to them, your description of the state of the ice and of the navigable water in 1819 and 1820, in the route which he was ordered to pursue;—still less, I think, can there be a

* See Parliamentary Paper, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 109.

doubt in the mind of any one who had the advantage of being with you in those years,—that Franklin (always supposing no previous disaster) must have made his way to the south-west of Melville Island, either in 1845 or 1846. It has been said that 1845 was an unfavourable season; and as the navigation of Davis's Straits and Baffin's Bay was new to Franklin, we may regard it as more probable that it may have taken him two seasons to accomplish what we accomplished in one. So far, I think, guided by his Instructions, and by the experience gained in 1819 and 1820, we may reckon pretty confidently on the first stage of his proceedings; and, doubtless, in his progress he would have left memorials in the usual manner at places where he landed, some of which would be likely to fall in the way of a vessel following in his track. From the west end of Melville Island our inferences as to his proceedings must become more conjectural. . . . If he found the ocean, as we did, covered to the west and south . . . with ice of a thickness unparalleled, . . . he would, after probably waiting through one whole season, in the hope of favourable change, have retraced his steps, in obedience to the second part of his Instructions, in order to seek an opening to the north which might conduct to a more open sea. . . . He may, however, have found a more favourable state of things at the south-west end of Melville Island" than we did, and "have been led thereby to attempt to force a passage for his ships in the direct line of Behring's Strait, or perhaps, in the first instance, to the south of that direction; viz., to Banks' Land. In such case two contingencies present themselves; first, in the season of 1847 he may have made so much progress, that in 1848 he may have preferred . . . to push through to Behring's Strait, or to some western part of the continent, to an attempt to return by the way of Barrow's Strait; . . . the second contingency," and it is the one which "compels me, in spite of my wishes, to regard as the more probable, . . . his advance from Melville Island, in the season of 1847, may have been limited to a distance of 50, or perhaps 100 miles at farthest; and in 1848 he may have endeavoured to retrace his steps, but with only partial success. . . . Under these circumstances, incapable of extricating the ships, . . . the crews may have been . . . obliged to quit them, and attempt a retreat, not towards the continent, being too distant, but to Melville Island, where certainly food, and probably fuel (seals), might be obtained, and where they would naturally suppose that vessels despatched from England for their relief, would, in the first instance, seek them. . . . *Where the Esquimaux have*

lived, there Englishmen may live; and no valid argument against the attempt to relieve can, I think, be founded on the improbability of finding Englishmen alive in 1850, who may have made a retreat to Melville Island in the spring of 1849; nor would the view of the case be altered in any material degree if we suppose their retreat to have been made in 1848 or 1849 to Banks' Land, which may afford facilities of food and fuel equal or superior to Melville Island, and a further retreat the following year to the latter island as the point at which they would more probably look out for succour. . . . The most promising direction for research would be by a vessel which should follow them to the south-west point of Melville Island." Finally, "one contingency unconsidered, . . . is that which would have followed in pursuance of his Instructions, if Franklin should have found the aspect of the ice too unfavourable to the west and south of Melville Island to attempt to force a passage through it, and he should have retraced his steps in hopes of finding a more open sea to the northward, either in Wellington Channel or elsewhere. . . . Here, also, the expedition may have encountered, at no very great distance, insuperable difficulties. . . . In this case the retreat of the crews . . . would most probably be directed to some part of the coast on the route to Melville Island," in expectation of succour.

Sir George Back (February 6th, 1850):* "In reference to the plan proposed . . . for continuing the search . . . in the direction of Barrow's Strait, Melville Island, and the openings north and south, especially Wellington Channel, together with a thorough examination of Jones's Sound, there cannot, I think, be a second opinion. . . . I am persuaded that the missing ships are somewhere thereabouts." Sir George concludes with "a hope that the second plan (by Capt. Hamilton) of exploring Jones's Sound may be simultaneously executed."

Capt. Beechey (February 7th, 1850), Section 3,† fully concurs with Parry, Hamilton, and Sabine, with one exception. He says, "I think Leopold Island and Cape Walker . . . should be examined prior to any attempt being made . . . in other directions from Barrow's Strait, and that the bottom of Regent's Inlet, about the Pelly Islands, should not be left unexamined." Alluding to his memorandum, January 17th, 1849, he says,—"I am still of opinion, had Sir John Franklin abandoned his vessels near the coast of America, and much short of the Mackenzie River, he would have preferred the

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 105.

† *Ibid.*, p. 106.

probability of retaining the use of his boats until he found relief in Barrow's Strait, to risking an overland journey *vid* the before mentioned river; and it must be remembered, that at the time he sailed, Sir George Back's discovery had rendered it very probable that Boothia was an island.

"4. An objection to the necessity of this search seems to be that, had Sir John Franklin taken this route, he would have reached Fury Beach already; however, I cannot but think there will yet be found some good grounds for the Esquimaux sketch, and that their meaning has been misunderstood; and as Mr. McCormick is an enterprising person, . . . I would submit whether a boat expedition from Leopold Dépôt, under his direction, would not . . . set at rest all inquiry upon this, now the only quarter unprovided for."

5. "The examination of the sounds at the head of Baffin's Bay, but especially of Jones's Sound, I fully concur in, . . . more especially as there seems to be an opinion that this sound will be found to communicate with the Wellington Channel."

Sir John Richardson (February 7th, 1856*) commences by various observations on the "supplies of food to be procured by diligent hunting parties," &c. Section 3. "With respect to the direction in which a successful search may be predicated with the most confidence, various opinions have been put forth; some have supposed either that the ships were lost before reaching Lancaster Sound, or that Sir John Franklin, finding an impassable barrier of ice in the entrance of Lancaster Sound, may have sought for a passage through Jones's Sound. I do not . . . give much weight to either conjecture."

4. "With respect to Jones's Sound, it is admitted by all who are intimately acquainted with Sir John Franklin, that his first endeavour would be to act up to the letter of his Instructions, and that, therefore, he would not lightly abandon the attempt to pass Lancaster Sound. . . . Had Sir John Franklin gained that sound, —and we appear to be fully justified in concluding that he did so,—and had afterwards encountered a compact field of ice, barring Barrow's Strait and Wellington Sound, he would then . . . have borne up for Jones's Sound, but not until he had erected a conspicuous landmark, and lodged a memorandum of his reason for deviating from his Instructions."

5. "The absence of such a signal-post in Lancaster Sound is an

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 107.

argument against the Expedition having turned back from thence, and is, on the other hand, a strong support to the supposition, that Barrow's Strait was as open in 1845, as when Sir E. Parry passed it in 1819; that such being the case, Sir John Franklin, without delay, and without landing, pushed on to Cape Walker, and that subsequently, in endeavouring to penetrate to the south-west, he became involved in the drift ice, which there is reason to believe, urged by the prevailing winds, and the set of the flood tides, is carried towards Coronation Gulf, through channels more or less intricate. Should he have found no opening at Cape Walker, he would, of course, *have sought one further to the west*; or, finding the southerly and westerly opening blocked by ice, he might have tried a northern passage."

11. "Mr. Penny's project, restricted, as it is, to the search of Jones's Sound at its outlets, seems a fitting appendage to the other measures. Although I have endeavoured to show, in a preceding paragraph, that it is not likely the missing ships entered Jones's Sound from Baffin's Bay, yet, as they may have been compelled to make a northerly course from Barrow's Strait, and might afterwards, in trying to regain Baffin's Bay, have been arrested near Wellington Sound, with which it is understood Jones's Sound communicates, the latter ought to be explored, and its headlands carefully examined. The cairn . . . seen at the entrance of the sound should be visited, and searched for memoranda."

From the foregoing proposition of the hydrographer, and the opinions elicited by it, we are enabled to infer the sense in which the Franklin Instructions were viewed in 1850. Simple as these Instructions are, it will be seen other and a different meaning is given to them; or whence is it that these opinions vary so greatly, in some cases at variance, not only with the Instructions themselves, but also with each other? Hence any attempt to deduce a course for the Franklin Expedition from them would lead to conclusions most deceptive and erroneous. All, more or less, look to the west; but the error would lie, whether to the north or south of that point: the leaning seems to the north, and is, therefore, in *opposition to his orders*. We would rather these opinions had been less discursive; from this cause arises that indefinable vagueness in some of them, which imparts the tone of weakness and indecision observable in them. Facts are ever terse and stubborn, and need no verbose or elaborate style of expression; more brevity had given them more clearness. We fancy, too, we see in the expression of some of them a deference to others' opinions, rather than the enunciation of an

unfettered conviction; and yet two elements antagonistic each to each are visible—extreme caution and bold assertion. We admire the former, for the subject was momentous; but still, we think, whilst we would shut out bold assumption, that a more determinate expression might have been adopted, as we find it is in some cases, with equal soundness of judgment. Again, these opinions involve a very extended line of search. To us it seems impracticable, with four vessels only, in a climate with so short a season for navigation. How such various views could have arisen, it is our object to inquire; for it should be remembered, the plan was simple, and limited to a given space—between 98° and 115° west; and the Instructions are clear and positive—they admitted not of doubt. In them the Wellington Channel was only considered as secondary. Whatever value may have been given to “intentions” attributed to Sir John Franklin, those “intentions” were overruled by his orders; and unless we are prepared to think he would premeditatedly resolve to be faithless to them, a charge too grave to be entertained, we must throw overboard all assumed “intentions” on his part. In the absence of positive intelligence of the actual movements of the Expedition, we ought to have taken for granted that that gallant leader was endeavouring to fulfil his orders to the utmost of his power; and it was for us to follow *after him, taking them as our guide.*

The hydrographer's views as to the course of the missing Expedition appear to us rather obscure. He says, “His first attempt was undoubtedly made in the direction of Melville Island, and not to the westward.” To reach Melville Island from the east involves making westing: we presume he means, and not “to the westward of it.” But even this rendering of the sentence is not reconcileable with his views given in his “Report on the Proposed Expedition to Behring's Strait.” He there says, “Their orders would have carried them towards Melville Island, and *then out to the westward*, where they are entangled, &c.; and he endeavours to prove this. “For should they (the ships) have been arrested at some intermediate place, as Cape Walker, or at one of the northern chain of islands,” or “much to the southward of Banks' Land,” or lastly, “Wellington Channel,” we should have heard of them; and he concludes hence, “that they are locked up in the archipelago, to the westward of Melville Island.” We cannot account for this discrepancy.

Capt. Hamilton's memorandum of Franklin's conversations at Stromness about Jones's Sound may be summed up in that officer's own words. “Mr. Hamilton has construed his mentioning Jones's

Sound in a conditional sense, as an unconditional statement of his intentions." Capt. Penny's opinion of Jones's Sound, and its connection with Wellington Channel, is geographically of value, and would be in the search, if we were certain Franklin had gone up that Channel; but we were not, and, therefore, it seems to us of little value. The same may be said of Capt. Gravill's suggestions as to Jones's and Smith's Sounds. Capt. Lee's experience we are taught to value. If he makes such mistakes in his latitudes, Heaven only can tell us what dependence we ought to place on his longitudes; not to have examined the carpenter's cairn was, to say the least, negligent.* Finally, as to Jones's and Smith's Sounds, here given an undue importance to—an importance founded solely on the idea that the Expedition had altogether failed in the south-west—a mere supposition, which we cannot admit. If shut out from Lancaster Sound, Franklin, we repeat, would never have left the known for the unknown, without leaving notices of his determination. Dr. McCormick's plan for searching by Jones's Sound is daring, but again, he is active and enthusiastic. We have already ventured some observations on his plan.

Sir Edward Parry speaks with much apparent decision as to the direction in which the "main search" should be renewed, from a "conviction of the probability of the missing ships . . . being shut up at Melville Island, Banks' Land, or in that neighbourhood." He thinks Franklin followed his orders, and "employed two seasons in an unremitting attempt to penetrate westward or southward towards Behring's Strait, and that he is shut up at Melville Island, Banks' Land, or in that neighbourhood," and therefore the "main search" should be renewed in that direction, but he does not say whether to the eastward or westward of Banks' Land; he indicates the distance as "considerable," as "baffling the efforts of the weakened crews to escape," either by Barrow's or Behring's Straits; still all this is very vague;—he admits it "conjectural." Not a word is said of Cape Walker and the south-west: of that important space to which Franklin was directed, namely, Melville Sound. We again say, if the imagination had nothing firmly to fix itself upon but conjecture—but probability—why not have conjectured it probable (it is admitted he would follow his orders) that he *would go where he*

* See Blue Book, "Arctic Expedition, 1852," p. 128. "It was not Jones's Sound he was in in that year. It was a deep inlet, in from $74^{\circ} 40' N.$ to $75^{\circ} N.$, as near as he can say."

was sent—and there we ought to seek him—that is, in Melville Sound. Sir Edward's "probabilities" have been strengthened by a letter from Colonel Sabine. Of this we shall have to speak in our notice of it, to which we refer our readers. Sir Edward includes in his plan of search "a thorough examination of Wellington Channel . . . and other openings between the Parry Islands, . . . because considerable weight is due to the conjecture offered by persons of sound judgment (?) *that if failing to the west, Sir John Franklin would try a more northern route.*" Why, this alternative was permitted him by his Instructions. There is no "soundness" evinced here; no need for conjecture; every one knew it who knew aught of the subject; then why waste time and words about it? This question should have been considered, *Had he failed to the westward and southward?* and the only answer that could be given was, We did not know. The next best thing to be done, then, was to ascertain; to send an expedition, and thoroughly examine Cape Walker, and thence to the south-west on to Banks' Land; in short, the whole of Melville Sound. A passing examination of the headlands from Wellington Channel to Melville Island might have been made by a second division at the same time. Sir Edward notices Jones's and Smith's Sounds, but it would seem, only from the "great stress" laid upon them by others; the vague report of the cairn of stones seen by Captain Lee, he thinks, should be set at rest and, finally, he believes the efforts of Collinson, Rae, and Pullen "from the south will complete a concentration of search in the direction of Banks' Land and Melville Island, which, he thinks, constitutes our best hope of success." From this it is clear the north holds out little promise to Sir Edward Parry; his hopes are centred in the south and west; and we entirely agree with him, for there lies the area in which Franklin was sent, and there we should follow.

Colonel Sabine says, in his letter to Sir Edward Parry, "There can be little doubt in the mind of any one who has read attentively Franklin's Instructions . . . but that he must have made his way to the *south-west part of Melville Island.*" Surely there is some mistake here, or we have misconceived Franklin's Instructions. The south-west part of Melville Island, as then known, was that given by Sir Edward Parry, viz., at or about Cape Dundas. To reach it, Franklin must have passed between Melville Island and Banks' Land, that particular part he was directed to avoid, "in consequence of the unusual magnitude" and "fixed state of the barrier of ice observed (by Parry, 1820) off that cape." Why, then, suppose him

there, in face of Section 6 of his Instructions? and yet, Colonel Sabine has "little doubt" of it; nor can "any one," he says, "who has read attentively Franklin's Instructions," and "Parry's description of the state of the ice in 1819-20." Why, this very description induced the Admiralty to caution Franklin *not* to make the attempt that way. We are wholly at a loss to account for the Colonel's ideas on this subject. We must speak positively. It may be safely affirmed Franklin never attempted to reach Cape Dundas or the south-west end of Melville Island. He *was ordered to the south-west from Cape Walker*, and we had no information to prove that he was unable to penetrate in that direction. We cannot bring our minds to think that he abandoned his Instructions, and went to a part which he was especially directed not to attempt. We are compelled entirely to reject that idea, so contrary to the opinion of those who knew him—that he "was not a man to treat his orders with levity." Besides these, there is the improbability of his *leaving a limited, favourable area, where his energies might be concentrated*, to waste them on the illimitable unknown. We notice with pleasure, and fully concur in Colonel Sabine's observation, "Where the Esquimaux have lived, there Englishmen may live," and the conclusions he draws as to the probability of their existing in 1850 who have retreated in 1848 or '49, whether to Melville Island or Banks' Land. The reference to "Wellington Channel or elsewhere" is vague; still it is within the letter of Franklin's Instructions, assuming him as having failed "to the west and south of Melville Island;" but we think, if Franklin had advanced so far as to the meridian of that island, he would not have retraced his steps to make an attempt by Wellington Channel, but would have taken advantage of one of the more western passages of the Parry group.

Sir George Back presses the search generally in the right direction,—Barrow's Strait, Melville Island, and the openings north and south,—but we cannot agree to the specialty given to Wellington Channel and Jones's Sound; he thinks "the missing ships are somewhere thereabouts;" but where, in this extended area? If he had thrown overboard Wellington Channel and Jones's Sound, and confined his opinion to Melville Sound, he had probably been nearer about the position of the ships, and nearer his own formerly expressed views: at any rate, we knew of nothing to induce a change from them—where the ships were sent, there, and there only, could we have looked with reason to find them.

Captain Beechey, with a soundness of judgment that commands

our admiration, makes an exception to the general views entertained. He thinks, "Leopold Island and Cape Walker *should both* be examined *prior* to any attempt being made to penetrate in other directions from Barrow's Strait." This opinion is most important, as it confines attention to the points of Franklin's advance. He adds, "The Pelly Islands (Regent's Inlet)" should be examined also, as when Franklin sailed "Boothia was supposed to be an island," separated from the mainland by a passage between Back's River and Regent's Inlet, thus offering the means of escape to Fury Beach and Barrow's Strait. We must confess we should have looked for a retreating party in Barrow's Strait, but not by this circuitous route. "The sounds at the head of Baffin's Bay" he seems to think but little of; he concurs in their examination, but only to avoid the "painful regret of leaving them unexplored, . . . in the event of Franklin not being discovered in other directions." It is really gratifying to record the sentiments of this excellent, now lamented, officer.

Sir John Richardson attaches no weight to the opinion that Franklin's ships were lost in crossing to Lancaster Sound, or that they were barred out by ice at its entrance; nor does he believe they were shut out from Barrow's Strait or Wellington Channel. He thinks Penny might be employed in searching the outlets of Jones's Sound in Baffin's Bay, not because he believes the missing ships entered that sound from the eastward (by that bay), but in case of their having been compelled to a northerly course from Barrow's Strait up Wellington Channel, and arrested there by the ice; they might then try to escape to Baffin's Bay by the supposed communication between Wellington Channel and Jones's Sound. All his arguments enforcing these views are reasonable, and we may say conclusive on the several points. Still he thinks "*the expedition pushed on to Cape Walker and to the south-west, and became involved in the drift ice, which, there is reason to believe, urged by the prevailing winds and the set of the flood tides, is carried down to Coronation Gulf, through channels more or less intricate.*"

These observations are of the greatest importance, and we can only wonder they did not receive the attention they ought at the time. The following is not less so:—

"Should he (Franklin) have found no opening at Cape Walker, he would, of course, have sought one further to the west." Without doubt he would. Does it appear probable that, because he could not reach Cape Walker, he would abandon all hope to the west, over 17 degrees of longitude, with every favourable prospect of

effecting his object, and adopt the Wellington Channel route, which might lead him he knew not whither? It is improbable. He would try to gain all the westing he could over the whole space between 98° and 115° west; but "finding the southerly and westerly opening blocked by ice," or the existence of land, he might then, but not until then, have tried a northern passage. Of all the opinions that have been given, there are none more rational, more cogent, than Sir John Richardson's; it is in complete accordance with the general design of the voyage and alternative of Franklin's orders. Simple as this opinion appears, it especially marks the careful thought and investigation of this estimable, highly talented man; unswerving, he fixes his mind on the original intentions of the voyage, and all other thoughts are cast away. Amidst the whirl of distracting opinions in others, he still steadily follows the movements of his former friend and companion in suffering,* guided and assured by the Instructions given to Franklin, and his belief that he would not depart from them without good and sufficient reason. The after expressed intentions attributed to Franklin have no influence over him; the northern openings from Barrow's Strait and Baffin's Bay are of but little value in his estimation. We had as yet not searched for the expedition in the primary direction in which it was sent, and consequently we were not assured that Franklin and his gallant officers and crews had not accomplished the great object for which they went forth from amongst us. It should be noticed, Sir John Richardson does not even mention Smith's Sound. The reasons are obvious; it was out of Franklin's track, and altogether unknown; it was, in fact, as William Baffin (its great discoverer) left it in 1616.

The sum of these opinions is, the majority look to the west, to Melville Island and Banks' Land. The solitary opinion that Franklin "must have made his way to the south-west end of Melville Island" must at once be rejected; because it is not only not within the spirit of his Instructions (see Sections 5, 6), but is in direct violation of them. There is much mention of Wellington Channel and Jones's Sound: the former is mere conjecture, and the latter is founded upon it. As to Smith's Sound, how it could be thought Franklin should have been found in that vicinity is past our comprehension; but it is another proof that when reason and fact are left, and imagination rules, what wild and improbable notions are produced: there was not the shadow of a hope of finding our missing country-

* Franklin and Sir John Richardson were together on that fatal expedition, *vid* the Coppermine River, 1819-20, and again down the Mackenzie, in 1825-6.

men in that direction. The impossibility of searching so vast an extent of coast from the south-west end of Melville Island to Smith's Sound, during the brief period of an Arctic summer, has been noticed. Happily, some of these opinions redeem *from oblivion the space, the plan, and the Instructions upon which the Franklin Expedition was to act*; they show how sound and legitimate were the original objects of the voyage. We should have wished to have seen Melville (or Parry) Sound specifically named for rigid examination. How much more worthy consideration than Wellington Channel, or Jones's or Smith's Sounds, the very mention of which distract from the original plan! In and by that Melville Sound was centred all our fairest prospects of a passage, best hopes of finding our countrymen, and restoring them to their kindred and their homes. However, it is highly gratifying, amid this jumble of facts and probabilities, to observe how highly and how justly the name and character of Sir John Franklin is appreciated, how strongly his sense of duty is insisted on. The hydrographer urges, "He was not the man to treat his orders with levity;" backed by Sir Edward Parry, who adds to those words, "which he would be justly chargeable with doing, if he attached greater weight to any notions which he might personally entertain, than to the Admiralty Instructions." These feelings are corroborated by his early friend and companion in Arctic discovery, Sir John Richardson:—"It is admitted by all who are intimately acquainted with Sir John Franklin, that his first endeavour would be to act up to the letter of his Instructions. . . Without delay and without landing" he "pushed on to Cape Walker and to the south-west." These expressions of esteem and confidence are echoed by all; and however these opinions may (as we much regret to see) differ as to the direction Franklin took, and the probable, or rather, improbable localities suggested by some for search, with the desire to recover him, still all are united in bearing testimony to the distinguished qualities of this great commander, a testimony worthy the man, and the fair fame of Sir John Franklin.

Lady Franklin (February 11th, 1850) enclosed to the Admiralty various offers of service from the United States of America and Canada. The first in order of date is from Mr. W. Snow (New York, January 7th, 1850).*

This gentleman suggests a land expedition, of a party of 100 men, to proceed to Moose Fort (Hudson's Bay), thence to Chesterfield

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," pp. 137-8.

Inlet; the party then to be divided into three detachments. One party to proceed westerly to the "*easternmost limits of discovery yet made* from Behring's Strait, not beyond; a second party, the central, to shape a course towards the magnetic pole; and the third party (the easternmost) to go "direct to Prince Regent's Inlet, or the *westernmost point of discovery from the east*;" or "if a public and more extensive expedition, one upon a similar plan with the same number of men, say 300, or more, formed into three great divisions, one to proceed by the Athabasca, or Great Slave Lake, and follow out Capt. Back's discoveries; the second, through the Churchill district; and the third according to the plan of the private expedition before named." Mr. Snow thinks "the present position of the Arctic voyagers is not very accessible either by land or sea," or long ere this the Franklin Expedition would have, if not the whole, at least a part, returned. The object of the author is to force an expedition to them. The long letter, of which the above is the essence, seems to us to emanate more from enthusiasm and a humane desire to afford relief to our absent countrymen, than from reflection as to the practicability to carry it out. One hundred, and in the second plan, 300 men through the Hudson's Bay Company's territories, to be "upheld and pushing forward," seems difficult. Mr. Snow admits it, and would employ "convicted criminals," if no other men would engage themselves. The employment of such men in a humane cause, who had forgotten their duty to their fellow men amid more peaceful, less responsible, and less perilous scenes, seems to us to border closely on hallucination. Both of these plans embrace a quarter where it was scarcely probable Franklin or his parties were likely to be found; if retreating from the space between Cape Walker and Banks' Land, they would endeavour to reach Port Leopold in Barrow's Straits, to take advantage temporarily of the supplies at Fury Beach, under the hope of ultimately receiving succour from Lancaster Sound from the whalers, or a relieving expedition from England; or, if far to the south and west, from the Hudson's Bay Company's stations, *vid* the Mackenzie River; but under no circumstances can we imagine they would make towards the southward and eastward, say to the embouchure of Back's River, unless the trending of the land at the bottom of Melville Sound, unknown then as now, forced them in an easterly direction to take advantage of the passage then supposed to exist between Back's River and Regent's Inlet, and so on to Fury Beach. Any attempt to ascend Back's River is most unlikely. Sir John Franklin was too

fully aware of its difficulties, its poverty in animal life for the supply of his men, &c., to attempt it. The route by Repulse Bay, and on to the Hudson's Bay Company's posts of Churchill, &c., is equally improbable, as Franklin was not aware of the discoveries of Dr. Rae in 1847, and the possibility of escape in that direction. These plans are ill considered; the scene of action is too far from the resources, and too exhaustive for so large a body of men to be of any use: even supposing them to have arrived on the spot, they would be more fit objects for relief than for relieving. We think, too, this plan, although very extensive, takes in a too circumscribed portion of Arctic America, and that in a very questionable direction.

Mr. John M'Lean, Guelph, Canada West, 11th January, 1850.* The plan recommended by this gentleman is, by a vessel from York Factory to Wager River, *vid* Sir Thomas Rowe's Welcome, and thence to the Arctic Sea, "some 60 or 70 miles distant (?), then dividing into two parties, one to proceed east, the other west; he thinks 250 or 300 miles might be explored in either direction." The part of the Arctic Sea to be visited is not sufficiently defined; this plan otherwise seems practicable, but still it is not directed to a part where we should have looked for any retreating parties from the *Erebus* and *Terror*, unless under such circumstances as we have noticed on Mr. Snow's plan.

Enclosed with the preceding is the message of the President of the United States, Z. Taylor, Esq. (Washington, 4th January, 1850), to the Senate and House of Representatives, and the correspondence of the Vice-President, Millard Fillmore, Esq., John M. Clayton, George Bancroft, and Silas E. Burrows, Esqrs., to Lady Franklin.† These documents are all in reply to her ladyship's eloquent and touching appeal to the President, and through him to the sympathies of the American people, to aid in the search for the long-missing expedition (dated 4th April, 1849). We would endeavour to do justice to these more than interesting documents, by transcribing them in full, but the limited object of these pages does not permit us to detail the deep feeling here shown by our trans-Atlantic brethren, and yet feeling has originated our mission. Surely, if ever there was a sincere reciprocation of honest solicitude of man for his fellow man, we find it exemplified here for our missing countrymen—from the chief magistrate to the citizen, from the citizen to the chief magistrate!

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 141.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 143-50.

We can only say, long may such mutual feelings, such generous emotions, exist between the mother and daughter, proved as they have since been by the daughter's best test of sincerity, "action." We cannot leave this correspondence without noticing how clearly Lady Franklin, in an explanatory paper, lays down the Instructions given to her gallant husband (on his departure), for the guidance of the President and people of the United States.* She adds:—"It is possible that they may be found in quarters the least expected, but in the first instance the attention . . . *should be directed to the quarters pointed at in the Admiralty Instructions to Sir John Franklin.*"† In her anxiety she calls attention to the channels leading out of Barrow's Strait to the north. She mentions, too, "Wellington Channel," and "the sounds and inlets north and west of Baffin's Bay;" and to the south, "Boothia, North Somerset, Gulf of Boothia and Regent's Inlet, and the coast eastward of the Coppermine to Back's River."

The next enclosure is from Lieut. Sherard Osborn (6th October, 1850).‡ After an observation on the importance of giving to generous America "a clear field for the exercise of their energy and emulation," he offers the following as points for search, in which it is probable the lost expedition may be found:—"The coast of Repulse Bay, Hecla and Fury Strait, Committee Bay, Felix Harbour, the estuary of the Great Fish River, and Simpson's Strait, with the sea to the north-west of it." He reasons:—"Suppose Sir John Franklin to have so far carried out the tenor of his orders as to have penetrated south-west from Cape Walker, and to have been either" cast away, "or hopelessly impeded by ice," and "found it necessary to quit his ships, they being anywhere between 100° and 108° W., and 70° and 73° N., . . . to retrace his steps to Cape Walker, and thence to Regent's Inlet, would be, no doubt, the first suggestion that would arise. Yet there are objections to it. Firstly. He probably would have to contend against the prevailing set of the ice and currents (?) and northerly winds. . . . Secondly. If no whalers were found in Lancaster Sound, how was he to support his party where the musk ox and reindeer are never seen? Thirdly. Leaving his ships in the

* The thanks of the Royal and the Royal Geographical Societies were at this time offered to the Government and people of the United States. See Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," pp. 149-50.

† Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 146; and *Ibid.*, No. 97, 1851, pp. 1-4.

‡ Parliamentary Papers, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 151.

summer, . . . he could only reach the whaling ground in the fall of the year. . . . In such case, would it not be advisable to make rather for the southern than the northern limit of the sea visited by whalers? Fourthly. By edging to the south rather than to the north, Sir John Franklin would be falling back to, rather than going from relief, and increase the probabilities of providing food for his large party." Lieut. Osborn thinks he would not go "due south," because "Victoria Land was in his road, and when he did reach the American shore, he would attain a desert of whose horrors he no doubt retained a vivid recollection." He adds:—"There remained but one route for Sir John Franklin . . . to follow, and it decidedly has the following merits,—that of being in a direct line for the whale fishery; that of leading through a series of narrow seas adapted for . . . open boats; that of being the most expeditious route by which to reach Fort Churchill; that of leading through a region visited by Esquimaux and migratory animals; and this route is *through the straits of James Ross, across the narrow isthmus of Boothia Felix* (which was not supposed to exist when Sir John Franklin left England, and has since been discovered (?) . . . into the Gulf of Boothia, where he would pass by Hecla and Fury Strait into the fishing ground of Hudson's Strait, or else go southward down Committee Bay, cross the Rae Isthmus into Repulse Bay, and endeavour from there to reach some vessels in Hudson's Bay, or otherwise, Fort Churchill. It is not unlikely, either, that when Franklin had got to the eastern extremity of James Ross' Strait, and found land . . . where he had expected to find a strait, that his party might have divided, and the more active . . . attempted to ascend Back's River, where we have Sir George Back's authority for supposing they would find . . . abundance of food, in fish and herds of reindeer, &c." (?), "whilst the others travelled on the road I have already mentioned. . . . A search for them, therefore, on this line of retreat I should think highly essential." Lieut. Osborn suggests the following plan, of which we can only give the outline:—

"Suppose a well-equipped expedition to enter Hudson's Strait, and then to divide into two divisions, one to go northward through Fox Channel, to Hecla and Fury Strait, examine the shores of the latter carefully, . . . and proceed to Melville, or Felix Harbour, in Boothia, . . . and despatch . . . boat parties across the neck of the isthmus into the western waters, . . . divide, . . . and one party to proceed through James Ross' Strait, and push over sea, ice, or land to the north-west as far as possible. . . . The other boat

party to examine the estuary of the Great Fish River," and "westward along the coast of Simpson's Strait," and "examine the Broad Bay formed between it and Dease's Strait." The second division "might pass south of Southampton Island, and coast along from Chesterfield Inlet (northward) to Repulse Bay; there boat parties might cross Rae Isthmus into the bottom of Committee Bay, . . . visit both shores of the said bay, and rendezvous at the western entrance of Fury and Hecla Strait. . . . The second division should then pass into Fox Channel, and turning through Hecla and Fury Strait, pick up the boats at the rendezvous," and "steer northward along the unknown coast extending as far as Cape Kater," and from thence "to Leopold Island, and having secured the ships there, despatch boat or travelling parties in a direction south-west from Cape Rennell (North Somerset), being in a parallel line to the line of search we shall adopt from Cape Walker, and at the same time it will traverse the unknown sea beyond the islands lately observed by Captain Sir James Ross: some such plan would, I think, ensure your gallant husband being met or assisted, should he be to the south or west of Cape Walker, and attempt to return by a south-east course."

Before we proceed farther with this plan, we would draw attention to the remarkable *extension eastward the line of search* is taking. Each recommendation increases it yet more. Already search has been proposed from "Melville Island in the west to the great sound at the head of Baffin's Bay in the east," including the passages between the Parry Islands and the Wellington Channel: this by the north. Hudson's Bay, Fury and Hecla Straits, Repulse Bay and Regent's Inlet, Boothia, Simpson's Strait, Back's River, and on to the Coppermine River, in the south. How to reconcile such widely extended and different directions for the escape of a retreating party, originally ordered to Cape Walker and the south-west, we are sorely perplexed. We had not, at this time, a particle of information to guide us, but the knowledge of where we had sent Sir John Franklin. How their Lordships at the Admiralty, with such conflicting and opposite elements before them, embracing half the compass, could arrive at anything like a sound conclusion, we cannot conceive, unless they were themselves "well up" on the question; but it must, even then, have been a great trial for their patience. It will have been observed, that no positive plan is yet offered for searching the area to which Sir John Franklin was specially ordered (that is, south-west of Cape Walker); it would have been a glorious and independent field

for our kind and generous brethren of the United States. Few at that time looked for a retreating party on the American continent eastward of 100° W., excepting the most crotchety or enthusiastic, or others led solely by their humane feelings, who would search here, there, everywhere, however improbable the direction, so that our long-absent countrymen might be found and restored. But the indulgence of these feelings only led to weakness in our operations; we attempted too much, and disappointment followed, as might be expected. In the prefatory remarks to the plan before us, we must notice several discrepancies, arising from hasty thought. First. If the expedition was so far westward, say, "between 100° and 108° W., and 70° and 73° N.," in attempting to retrace his steps to the eastward Franklin was not likely to be impeded, by either the set of the ice or currents. It was well known the general current ran to the eastward into Baffin's Bay, and with it the ice; therefore he would be assisted and not impeded by it. Then, as to the isthmus of Boothia Felix not being supposed to exist when Franklin sailed, but discovered since. This is quite erroneous; the Ross's expedition discovered it during their long captivity here from 1829 to '33, and Franklin was aware of its existence. However, he may have taken advantage of the isthmus and its chain of lakes to reach the Gulf of Boothia. We certainly think this far more probable than his attempting a retreat by the supposed passage between Back's River and the bottom of Regent's Inlet, more to the southward—it was nearer Fury Beach and its supplies, and it should not be forgotten, the southern part of Regent's Inlet was unknown when he sailed. Lieut. Osborn thinks he would pass by Hecla and Fury Strait to the fishing ground of Hudson's Strait, or cross Rae Isthmus into Repulse Bay. The first offers, according to Parry, an ice-blocked strait,—no very great recommendation,—we therefore think it very unlikely to have been adopted. The second might have been attempted; but it should be remembered it was little known, and consequently uncertain. Rae's discoveries in 1847 Franklin was, of course, unaware of. Franklin never expected to find a strait eastward of James Ross' Strait, across the Isthmus of Boothia. The author seems to have confounded the supposed strait from Back's River with one across the isthmus. He thinks one party may have ascended Back's River, and, if we are not strangely mistaken, misquotes Sir George Back as to its "abundance of fish and herds of reindeer," &c. We think it in the highest degree improbable that any party would make an attempt by that "execrable river," with its eighty falls, and its scarcity of animal life. Lieut.

Osborn seems altogether to have forgotten *Fury Beach and its supplies*, and the importance of Barrow's Strait as a means for relief and supply from England; and yet there was the example of Sir John Ross before him. We cannot understand why Franklin should be looked for so much to the southward and eastward, by Back's River—in preference to Port Leopold and Fury Beach. We had not reached Cape Walker, and therefore knew not what direction he had taken, otherwise than that conveyed in his Instructions. We knew nothing of the space between it and Banks' Land; it might be water, facilitating his course to the south-west; why, then, look for him in the south-east? Again, there was encouragement to look to the south-west, in the flood tide noticed by Sir John Richardson, as coming down Coronation Gulf from the northward and eastward, as he supposed, from between Victoria and Wollaston Lands. With respect to the plan, the assumed position for the missing ships is by no means improbable; we are, therefore, the more surprised that the author of it should have looked to the Isthmus of Boothia or Back's River as the direction in which Franklin would retreat (the former was probable, the latter not). Barrow's Strait was equally near, and more known.

The observations we have made on the author's prefatory remarks apply to the plan itself. We think it in a wrong direction, and the course proposed for the expedition, by Hudson's Bay and Fury and Hecla Straits, we consider altogether impracticable, seeing the magnitude of the obstacles and the delay that beset Parry, Lyon, and Back in their attempts to reach Regent's Inlet by that way. They were insurmountable, and yet seem not to have had due weight and reflection in the present case. The northern part of the search proposed, that is, from Cape Rennell to the south-west, could more easily be accomplished by way of Barrow's Strait, and if the bottom of Regent's Inlet required search, which at this period, when Cape Walker had yet to be examined, was doubtful, a boat expedition from Fort Churchill, *via* Repulse Bay, would have completed it well, if done as it had been previously done by Dr. Rae, 1847. By the same route, Back's River, James Ross', Dease's and Simpson's Straits might have been examined. We must confess with astonishment that such a route as that by Fury and Hecla Strait should have had an advocate, especially as time was then so precious, when the failure, or even the loss of a season, might be fraught with much misery if not death to those in whose favour the plan was proposed. We can see nought but failure in this plan in all its divisions, whether we

consider the navigation of Fox's Channel, or the attempt to push through Fury and Hecla Strait; and after the experience we have had of the ice-encumbered Regent's Inlet, we shall not, we trust, be thought presumptuous when we declare our sincere conviction, gathered from the experience of the past, that all attempts to cross from Fury and Hecla Strait to Melville or Felix Harbour would be utterly impracticable. The new departure recommended, viz., from Cape Rennell to the south-west, is beyond our conception. What resultant good could possibly arise from such a course? What value the traversing of an "unknown sea"? rather a sound, or at best an intricate strait, where Franklin was not ordered to go, and where, if he did go, he was safe, being within the range of succour from Fury Beach or from England by Lancaster Sound; or, lastly, What hope of finding him in a locality from whence Sir James Ross had just returned without discovering any traces of the expedition? But the author thinks it probable Franklin might be retreating to the south-east. We do not. We would willingly pass over the remainder of this plan, but the task we have undertaken compels us on. We have ever considered that the want of success, and its painful results, have had for their origin a speculative tendency arising from unrestricted thought, instead of being the calm conclusion of well weighed reflection. Hence, schemes wild and delusive, contradictory and distracting, have followed. Lieut. Osborn then speaks of *Smith's Sound*: it is but justice to him to say he alludes to it as "an argument that has been brought forward;" but he thinks it quite possible Franklin, "having failed in getting through the middle ice, . . . may have turned northward, and gone up Smith's Sound. Every mile beyond its entrance" was new ground, and a reward to the discoverers; it likewise brought them nearer the Pole, "and . . . that open sea of which Wrangel speaks so constantly." Is this probable? He is here made to attempt a sound not even mentioned in his Instructions. It will be scarcely credited, —and yet this is not all,—the very limited area to which Franklin was directed seems now altogether lost sight of; the south-west is forgotten; that area to which our attention ought to have been solely confined. It had become extended, as we have noticed, from Melville Island in the west to the head of Baffin's Bay in the east; but even this extension for search in a northern direction is *now deemed insufficient*, and is to be farther extended eastward. "I think," says the plan before us, "a small division of vessels starting from Spitzbergen, and pushing in a north-west direction, might be of great service;" for

"it will be seen Spitzbergen is as near the probable position of Franklin (*if he went north about*), on the east as Behring's Strait is upon the west." Surely we have now reached the eastern limit for search by the north; imagination can no further go! A northern limit is here assigned to Greenland; it is converted into an island. Parry's experience of the sea north of Spitzbergen seems not to have been consulted; but we now leave this plan. Having endeavoured to do justice to it by copious quotation, how far, if adopted, it presents in its details any reasonable hope for the recovery of the gallant Franklin and his companions, who were ordered in a contrary direction, we must leave to our readers more conversant with the subject than ourselves; for ourselves, we believe it does not; on the contrary, we think such plans allure attention from the true direction for search, and may lead us to bitter reflections and painful endless regrets.

Other enclosures are from John Russel Bartlett, Esq.* to the Rev. Dr. Scoresby (Nov. 27th, 1849), enclosing a plan (but which does not appear in the Blue Book), also a letter from Capt. W. F. Lynch, U.S. Navy, dated Baltimore, Maryland, Nov. 17, 1849, late of the U.S. Expedition to Syria, expressing a wish to volunteer for the search. It contains also a notification that Capt. Wilkes, U.S. Navy (late commander of the U.S. Antarctic Expedition), had tendered his valuable services to his Government. These expressions of our American brothers in favour of Franklin and his companions cannot fail to be appreciated.

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 107 "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 154.

CHAPTER VIII.

DR. KING—REMARKS—PENNY AND STEWART SAIL—INSTRUCTIONS—
 AUSTIN AND OMMANEY SAIL—INSTRUCTIONS—SIR JOHN ROSS
 SAILS—REMARKS—"PRINCE ALBERT" SAILS—"PRINCE ALBERT"
 RETURNS—ESQUIMAUX REPORT—FIRST TRACES OF FRANKLIN—
 OUR VIEWS, 1850—YEAR 1850 CLOSES.

DR. KING, in a letter, dated February 18, 1850, to the Admiralty, again urged his plan of search by the way of the Great Fish River: as the Dr. reiterates merely the same views, already fully noticed, we need not recapitulate them here.

That the British Parliament were not unmindful (February, 1850), of the fearful position of our long absent countrymen, we quote the following. Sir Robert Harry Inglis, in moving for any reports that might have been made by any of the officers employed in the late expeditions, and for copies of any plans of search, &c., &c.,* said he was "desirous of exciting an expression of sympathy for those who were now passing a fifth year—if God should have spared their lives—amid the horrors of an Arctic winter. He earnestly urged upon Her Majesty's ministers to take such measures for the relief of their fellow countrymen as their own zeal, and the science of those by whom they were surrounded, might teach them to be most applicable for the purpose. The Government ought but lightly to esteem that person who could move for even a bit of paper in reference to future proceedings, who did not at the same time acknowledge what they had already done upon the same subject. At the same time he was bound to urge upon them not to lose a month, a week, a day, or even an hour, in seeking to release those gallant men from their perilous position. For every former expedition had failed, if not entirely or principally, yet in some measure, at least, from not having been sent forth from this country at an earlier period. In order that the search might be effectual, it ought to commence in *Baffin's Bay*, at the end of May or the beginning of June, so that it might take advantage of the first opening in July. . . . He had not said a word on

* Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, March 5th, 1850, No. 107.

the subject as being one connected with humanity, with national honour, or with science; but the feeling of humanity ought to compel them, and a feeling of national honour ought to induce them to do what he now urged on Her Majesty's Government, without a word being said about science. For what did they hear at the close of last session? That the Governments of two other States were engaged in making preparations for rescuing our countrymen. He believed there was no precedent in history of one nation sending forth an expedition to rescue the lives of the subjects of another nation. He did not know whether, either in the case of Russia or of the United States, their hopes had been realized; but the honour of England required that efforts should be made by England herself to rescue our own countrymen. . . . This was not a private question, he would not therefore introduce private considerations; but when he reflected on the extraordinary conduct of the wife of Sir John Franklin, of her self-denying efforts in the cause of her husband and his companions: when he considered the hundreds of persons who were interested in the fate of the husbands and brothers now engaged in that expedition, he thought he did not unreasonably prefer his suit to the First Lord of the Admiralty, when he expressed a hope that he would take the subject into consideration, not merely from a sense of humanity towards those who were missing, or from a sense of national honour, or from a consideration for the cause of science, but also from a sympathy for the anguish and suspense that had been felt by so many of those who, though breathing the same genial air with ourselves at home, were suffering for those who were now separated from them, and were existing in the regions of an ice-bound zone." The First Lord of the Admiralty, Sir Francis Baring, stated in reply that it was the intention of the Government to send out again in search of Sir John Franklin, by Lancaster Sound, and that the various plans submitted to them had received their most anxious consideration. He thought it right to state that he had never done the House of Commons or the country the injustice to suppose that expense would be an obstacle when the lives of their fellow countrymen were at stake (an expression received with acclamation by the House), and that everything that human power could do should be done to save the lost expedition; while he was glad "to say that His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Russia, the United States of America, and the Hudson's Bay Company, had most cordially entered into these views, and manifested the most earnest sympathy."

The First Lord might well say, in speaking of the plans submitted to them, that they had received *anxious consideration*: they were so numerous, so contradictory, and so widely extended, it demanded the exercise of every anxious thought and consideration, that they should be enabled to distinguish between those which had reason and probability for their basis and those which were merely the plausible emanations of heated thought.

The Admiralty must have presented at this time the similitude of a very *Babel*; such the "confusion of tongues," vying with that confusion of old. Would they had been scattered, and completed the resemblance! Their lordships saw the chaos around them, and probably dreaded the evil that might arise out of such conflicting elements; but out of them, we are bound to say, they sought to "educe good." They saw the *danger of delay*, and out of the discordant maze, the distracting elements before them, endeavoured to elicit Fact and Truth. Perplexed they were on all sides; the wonder, then, is, not that Cape Walker, and thence to the south-west, should have received only a secondary consideration, but that the first point of Sir John Franklin's Instructions should have been remembered, or, if remembered, been considered at all. The advocates for the search by the north certainly contributed their share to this chaotic result; those advocating the search southward of Barrow's Strait, however erring in detail, must be considered comparatively as harmless; inasmuch as they looked in a more reasonable direction. However, false as many of these opinions were, they led to the equipment and despatch of two expeditions by the way of Barrow's Strait, as will be noticed, in due course; each independent of the other, but, anomalous as it may seem, *both under the direction of the Government*.

In March intelligence was received from Lieut. W. J. S. Pullen and Dr. Rae.

Lieut. Pullen,* accompanied by Mr. W. H. Hooper,† with three boats, left the *Plover* off Wainwright Inlet, July 25, 1849, to examine the coast between it and the Mackenzie River, where they arrived on Sept. 5th, 1849. Having achieved this adventurous voyage in safety, they encountered several mishaps, all of which, with the usual ready expedients of our sailors, were soon overcome, but without discovering any traces of the Franklin Expedition, nor had any of the Esquimaux with whom they communicated seen anything of ships or men. Mr. Pullen and his party were accompanied by the

* See Blue Book, "Arctic Expedition, 1852," pp. 23—33.

† Author of "Ten Months among the Tents of the Tuski."

Nancy Dawson, yacht, owned and commanded by Robert Sheddon, Esq.,* to and beyond Point Barrow. This gentleman rendered them every and valuable assistance, the more praiseworthy as it was done in defiance of a most unruly, mutinous crew.

Dr. Rae, in a despatch dated Sept. 1, 1849,† details his unsuccessful attempt to reach Wollaston Land from the Coppermine River, during the past summer. It will be remembered that this indefatigable traveller had been intrusted by Sir John Richardson with the exploration of a strait then supposed to exist between Wollaston and Banks' Lands; and, if possible, to reach Banks' Land. "He accomplished the journey to Cape Krusenstern, but all his attempts—and they were numerous and daring—to effect the traverse to Wollaston Land were baffled, by the heavy pack ice which entirely barred the progress of his boat. Having waited in hopes of a change as long as he could, taking into consideration the imperative necessity of returning before the closing up of the Coppermine River, he was reluctantly compelled to abandon the enterprise."‡ One might regret this failure of success, but could not blame: a perusal of this despatch will convince the most exacting there was no lack of exertion on Dr. Rae's part.

Mr. William Penny was now (April) appointed to the command of the *Lady Franklin* and the *Sophia*; the latter under Mr. Alexander Stewart. Well manned and provisioned, they sailed from Aberdeen April 13th, 1850. The reasons assigned by the Lords of the Admiralty for appointing Mr. Penny to this anomalous command, may thus be given in brief extracts from their orders to him, dated April 11th, 1850.§

"Section 2.—In entrusting you with the above command, we do not deem it advisable to furnish you with minute instructions as to the course you are to pursue. In accepting your offer of service, regard has been had to your long experience in Arctic navigation, and to the attention you have evidently paid to the subject of the missing ships. We deem it expedient rather that you should be instructed in all the circumstances of the case, and that you should be left to the exercise of your own judgment and discretion.

* This gentleman had formerly been in the Navy. He died on his return, at Mazatlan, much esteemed and sincerely lamented. He was the first to circumnavigate the globe in a yacht.

† Parliamentary Papers, No. 97, "Arctic Expedition, 1851," p. 44—50.

‡ See "Anniversary Address of the President of the Royal Geographical Society," Capt. (now Admiral) W. H. Smyth, May, 1850, pp. 1, li.

§ Parliamentary Papers, No. 397, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 2.

"Section 3.—For this purpose you will be furnished with copies of the original Instructions given to Sir John Franklin, and which Instructions will indicate the course he was directed to pursue, together with our orders and directions to Sir James Ross, . . . in the spring of 1848.

"Section 4.—You will be aware that the case virtually stands now as it did then; Sir James Ross, from adverse circumstances, failed in discovering traces of the missing expedition.

"Section 5.—Our orders of May 9th, 1848, to Sir James Ross, will serve as the indication of our views of the general course you will have to pursue; but it being our earnest desire that a certain strait known as *Alderman Jones's Sound* . . . should be searched, you are . . . directed to proceed in the first instance to that sound . . . proceeding . . . in the direction of Wellington Strait, and on to the Parry Islands and Melville Island.

"Section 6.—At the same time you will bear in mind that Sir John Franklin's orders were '*to push on through Lancaster Sound without stopping to examine any openings north or south of that sound, till he had reached Cape Walker.*' Obstructions may have forced Sir John Franklin north or south of his prescribed course, yet his principal object would be the gaining the latitude and longitude of Cape Walker.

"Section 7.—To that point, therefore, failing your discovering traces of the expedition . . . by Jones's Sound and the Parry Islands, your efforts will be directed, and beyond this, your own judgment must be your principal guide.

"Section 8.—Sir James Ross having partially searched the shores of Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait, as far west as Cape Rennell, without discovering traces of Sir John Franklin's ships, has led in some quarters to the *supposition* of an extreme case, viz., that *failing to get into Lancaster Sound,*" he "*had proceeded in the direction of Smith's Sound, at the head of Baffin's Bay.*"

"Section 9.—We do not deem it expedient to direct your attention especially to this sound, . . . but should your passage by Jones's Sound, to which you are specially directed, be early and absolutely impeded, and there should be the time (without hazarding the . . . chance of proceeding to Wellington Strait, the Parry Islands, and Cape Walker by Lancaster Sound) for examining Smith's Sound, you are at liberty to do so, but this is a contingency scarcely to be contemplated; as, in the event of your being frustrated in the attempt to get to the westward and towards Wellington Strait by Jones's

Sound, the late period of the year when Smith's Sound is said to be open would render it difficult, if not impossible, to continue a search in that quarter with the securing a passage into Lancaster Sound before the season closed.

"Section 10.—Much of the painful anxiety that now exists respecting the missing ships might possibly have been avoided if greater care had been taken to leave traces of their progress."

We cannot but notice in these instructions of their lordships, Sections 2, 3, and 4. They acknowledge Capt. Penny's "experience in Arctic navigation" and "the subject of the missing ships," but yet they deem it expedient that he should be "instructed in all the circumstances of the case." If Capt. Penny (we mention it with every respect for him) was not "well up" in the question, he ought not to have been employed; a mere ice-master was not wanted, but the scientific commander of an expedition; one perfectly conversant with the original plan and instructions, and upon what grounds they were based. We have always imagined that the required knowledge preceded the appointment to an extraordinary service, and not followed it. Was there any latent feeling of doubt as to the employment of Captain Penny? Did the Navy List contain no efficient names?

Again, to direct him to Jones's Sound before it was known Franklin, having failed in the south-west, had taken a northern channel, looks very like sending Penny in the pursuit of a myth; and their lordships seem to be under the same impression, for immediately after he is recalled to that most important section, No. 5, of Sir John Franklin's instructions, directing him to "push on through Lancaster Sound (and Barrow's Strait) without stopping to examine any openings north or south of that Strait, till he had reached Cape Walker." When it is remembered that Sir James Ross had failed in getting to Cape Walker, and that no new facts had arisen—in short, "that the case stood virtually now as it did then," it does seem surprising that Penny was not *at once ordered to Cape Walker and the south-west*. The mention of the extreme case supposed in "some quarters," that, because Sir James Ross only reached Cape Rennell (not Cape Walker), and did not discover any traces of Franklin, therefore he failed to get into Lancaster Sound, and proceeded at once in the direction of Smith's Sound, is really so eminently ridiculous that we are lost in wonderment how such monstrous notions could have come into existence and a place in print. However, Smith's Sound is to be examined, if Penny (shut out early from Jones's Sound) can achieve "a contingency scarcely to be contemplated;" viz., without

hazarding the chances by Wellington Strait, the Parry Islands, and Cape Walker, before the season closes—an exploit pronounced “difficult,” we should say *impossible*. These Instructions seem to us, like “a rope coiled against the sun,” to begin the wrong way; that is, with Jones’s Sound, Smith’s Sound, Wellington Channel, the Parry Islands, and lastly, Cape Walker. Now, we should have begun the search at Cape Walker; and for this reason,—the Franklin Expedition was sent in that direction; and having examined it and the south-west from it, and finding no trace of the expedition that way, we might have turned our thoughts to Wellington Channel and the Parry Islands, but Jones’s and Smith’s Sounds we regard as *altogether out of the true line for search*. A greater proof cannot be given of the distraction ruling at the Councils of the Admiralty at this period than these instructions. The wild absurdity of “assumed intentions” on Sir John Franklin’s part to attempt a route contrary to his written instructions is visibly forcing attention in a wrong and utterly hopeless direction. Chagrin and failure could not but follow. Whatever feeling or “good intentions” their lordships may have possessed, they are made foolishness by untoward influences and wild imaginary schemes. It is clear we could hope for no good results from Mr. Penny’s expedition, as far as regards the relief and restoration of our unfortunate countrymen. Let the north wind howl o’er them as it list! We think the remark (Section 10), “that much of the anxiety that now exists respecting the missing ships might have been avoided if greater care had been taken to leave traces of their progress,” quite unnecessary,—indeed, unjust. How did we know that Franklin had not left traces of his progress?—what had we done to prove he had not? Nothing; and yet he had been away five years. Here is another assumption—as thoughtlessly offered as it is recklessly adopted. Franklin was ordered not to *stop*, but to *push on* to the meridian of Cape Walker. We had not reached there, and yet we would blame him for not leaving traces of his progress. Why were not particular places named for depôts, rendezvous, and leaving despatches, before his departure? Rather let us blame ourselves for want of organization.

We will now notice the other Government expedition, composed of four vessels and commanded strictly by Naval officers; they were also to go by the way of Barrow’s Strait. The *Resolute*, Capt. Horatio T. Austin, C.B.; the *Assistance*, Capt. Erasmus Ommaney; the *Intrepid* and *Pioneer*, screw-tenders, commanded respectively by Lieuts. S. Osborn and I. B. Cator. This expedition, fully equipped and manned, sailed from Greenhithe May 4th, 1850. The orders

issued by the Admiralty to Capt. Austin are given briefly as follows.*

Capt. Austin was furnished with a copy of the orders given to Sir John Franklin and Sir James Ross, and the various papers which had been laid before the Houses of Parliament. By reference to them he would be "made aware that the opinions of the most able and experienced persons connected with Polar navigation" had been taken, and "*many valuable conjectures*" made.

"It has been suggested that Sir John Franklin may have effected his passage to Melville Island and been detained there. . . It has again been suggested as possible, that his ships may be detained in the neighbouring sea, . . and that . . he may have abandoned them and made his escape to that island. . . To these 'possibilities' you will give every proper weight."

"Section 4.—It therefore appears to us to be a main object of the expedition, . . to reach Melville Island, detaching a portion of your ships to search the shores of Wellington Channel, and the coast about Cape Walker, to which *point Sir John Franklin was ordered to proceed.*"

"Section 7.—In the prosecution of your search you will use your utmost efforts, . . taking care not to lose any opportunity . . of getting to the westward."

The general tenor of these Instructions, it will be seen, is in the right direction—that is, *in a westerly one*, by Barrow's Strait; but why the *Wellington Channel* should be deemed of such immense importance as to demand the *attention of both Austin and Penny*, we cannot conceive. Surely the point to which the Franklin Expedition was directed (Section 5 of his Instructions) ought to have obtained our first notice, and a rigid examination. As yet nothing had been done in that direction. The Franklin Expedition was provisioned only for three years, perhaps eked out to four; he had been away five, and nothing had been heard of him during all that time. He had not reached the coast of America; we could only conclude, then, that he had got entangled in the ice in the opening *between Cape Walker and Banks' Land*; or, shut out from there, had reached Melville Island, and perhaps taken advantage of one of the western passages *leading north between the Parry Islands*, with the hope of completing the passage by that route; but of all this we were ignorant, and therefore our first and most certain exertions should have been directed to

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 397, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 5.

Cape Walker and to the south-west; and complete the examination in that direction, and westward on to Banks' Land and Melville Island. The northern side of Barrow's Strait to Melville Island could have been examined at the same time; and Wellington Channel left solely to Messrs. Penny and Stewart.

The allusion to damage and abandonment of the ships in the neighbouring sea is very indistinct. Was this *sea westward or eastward* of Melville Island? if to the westward, we may ask, How did Franklin get there? but if to the eastward of that island, we say at once, Why not SEARCH IT? It is the fact of this sea not having been *searched, even up to this period*, that has led to the painful uncertainty that hangs over the movements of the Expedition, and with this uncertainty the most fearful anticipations of suffering and of death to the officers and crews of the *Erebus* and *Terror*.

Another expedition was at this time equipped by public subscription, at the head of which the Hudson's Bay Company appeared with a subscription of £500. It was composed of the *Felix* schooner and the *Mary* yacht, of only 12 tons, and was commanded by the Arctic veteran Sir John Ross, accompanied by Commander G. Phillips, R.N. It sailed from Loch Ryan 20th April, 1850. We have seen no copy of the Plan and Instructions by which Sir John Ross was to be governed, but we believe the following contains the general direction of them:—"He is to proceed to Barrow's Strait by the northern or southern route, as most advisable, and beginning at Cape Hotham, the western extremity of Wellington Channel, will examine all the headlands to the westward for deposited intelligence, and if none is found before reaching Banks' Land, the *Mary* will be left there as a vessel of retreat, while the *Felix* will continue her search during this and the ensuing year, after which Sir John Ross thinks that it will be needless, as he has no doubt that before that time the fate of the gallant Franklin and his devoted companions will be ascertained."*

We have already spoken of the generous sympathy of the President and people of the United States of America, in answer to the eloquent appeal of Lady Franklin; but "the delays incident to . . . national legislation menaced the defeat of her appeal. The bill making appropriations for the outfit of an expedition lingered on its passage, and the season for commencing operations had nearly gone by. At this juncture a noble-spirited merchant of New York . . . fitted out two of his own vessels, and proffered them gratuitously to

* See "Narrative of Arctic Discovery," by John J. Shillinglaw, F.R.G.S., p. 331.

the Government. Thus prompted by the munificent liberality of Mr. Henry Grinnell, Congress hastened to take the expedition under its charge, and authorized the President to detail from the Navy such necessary officers and seamen as might be willing to engage in it.* The vessels were named the *Advance* and the *Rescue*; Lieutenant E. J. De Haven, U.S. Navy, was selected for the chief command in the former, Mr. S. P. Griffin, Acting Master, to the latter. The officers were Messrs. Murdagh and Lovell, with Dr. K. Kane and thirteen men, in the *Advance*; and Messrs. Carter and Brooks, and Dr. Vreeland with twelve men, in the *Rescue*: gallant, noble-hearted fellows all. The Instructions issued by the Navy Department, Washington, 15th May, 1850, to Lieutenant E. J. De Haven, may be thus summarily given:†—He is directed to “make the best of his way to Lancaster Sound. . . . The chief object of this expedition is to search for, and, if found, afford relief to Sir John Franklin and his companions. You will, therefore, use all diligence and make every exertion to that end; paying attention, as you go, to subjects of scientific inquiry, only so far as the same may not interfere with the main object of this expedition. Having passed Barrow’s Strait, you will turn your attention northward to Wellington Channel, and westward to Cape Walker, and be governed by circumstances as to the course you will take. Accordingly, you will exercise your own discretion, after seeing the condition of the ice, sea, and weather, whether the two vessels shall here separate, one for Cape Walker and the other for Wellington Channel, or whether they shall both proceed together for the one place or the other. Should you find it impossible, on account of the ice, to get through Barrow’s Strait, you will then turn your attention to Jones’s Sound or Smith’s Sound; finding these closed or impracticable, and failing all traces of the missing expedition, . . . if so, you will return to New York. . . . Nearly the whole Arctic coast has been scoured without finding traces of the missing ships. It is useless for you to go there, or to re-examine any other place where search has already been made; you will, therefore, confine your attention to the routes already indicated.” Several observations follow, as to the point of maximum cold, and the probability of an “open sea (Polynia) to the north-west of the Parry Islands. . . . Should you succeed in finding an opening there, either after having

* See “The Narrative of the U.S. Grinnell Expedition in Search of Sir John Franklin,” by the late talented and highly esteemed, but now deeply lamented, Dr. K. Kane, 1854, p. 15.

† See Parliamentary Papers, No. 97, “Arctic Expedition, 1851,” pp. 2—4.

cleared Wellington Strait, or" the "Parry Islands by a northerly course from Cape Walker, enter as far as in your judgment it may be prudent to enter, and search every headland, &c., . . . for signs and records of the missing party. . . . If by any chance you should penetrate so far beyond the icy barrier as to make it . . . more prudent to push on than to turn back, you will do so. . . . Falling in with any of the British searching parties, you will offer them any assistance of which they may stand in need, and which it may be in your power to give. Offer also to make them acquainted with your intended plans," &c., &c.

The tenor of these Instructions points to the north and west, the Polynia, or sea free from ice, of Wrangell. This sea had long obtained much attention, and at this time more particularly; it was supposed to extend eastward to the north of the Parry Islands. Colonel Sabine, reasoning from analogy and the close resemblance and configuration of the northern coasts and islands of Asia and America, contributed largely to induce the belief in the existence of this Polar Sea; and Wrangell himself thinks,* "It should be possible to reach and to follow this open water to Spitzbergen." We think to these ideas, so prevalent among the scientific, may be attributed the notion that Sir John Franklin attempted the Wellington Channel; at all events, our trans-Atlantic brethren seem to have caught the infection, and to lean in the direction of the open sea of Wrangell. The desire to ascertain whether such Polar Sea existed or not was very natural and of great interest, for it involved an inquiry fraught with the most important probable results; but in the case before us—the relief and rescue of our missing countrymen, now in all likelihood painfully suffering from starvation and long exposure to these merciless regions—it was wrong to permit ourselves to be influenced in our search by a problematical Polar Sea; and this, too, before we had examined the first point to which Franklin was so peremptorily directed, a position on which rested our only trustworthy hope. It seems to us very much like abandoning the reality for the pursuit of the shadow. Our kind and generous brethren, no doubt, took their view from ourselves; but the end was fatal to their chivalrous efforts.

The *Advance* and *Rescue* sailed the 22nd May, 1850.

"Whatever may be the result of this expedition, as connected with the fate of the gallant Sir John Franklin, it is one which reflects the

* See the Preface to Wrangell's "Polar Sea," edited by Colonel Sabine. Second Edition. 1844.

highest honour upon the philanthropic citizen who projected it, and upon the officers and men engaged therein :” * and, *we may add, upon the American people as a nation.*

With the departure of Austin's, Penny's, and Ross's vessels, joined by those of our generous American friends under De Haven, again hearts at home beat warm. There would now be ten searching vessels in Barrow's Straits, full of ardour and zeal for the enterprise; and notwithstanding the time that had elapsed, still it was impossible to shut out the feeling of hope that good might arise. At this time we thought the search proposed extended over too great an area, to too many points, and in too widely different directions. Fear and doubt would, therefore, at times, intrude. We felt that too much was attempted, and the preference given to points holding out, to our views, but faint hopes of success; that they divided attention, distracted and weakened the efforts of these most efficient expeditions. We saw, too, and we deeply regretted it, that the true direction for search, Cape Walker and the space to the south-west of it, originally so important, was now nearly lost sight of, or, at best, looked upon as only secondary. *To that space Franklin was sent*, yet it was placed in the same category with places not even named in his Instructions; and yet no sound reasons could be offered for thus deviating from them, our only guide to him. In short, we dreaded failure. Already we had failed in our first efforts: now to fail might be fatal. The search, too, we thought, had been too long deferred, and particularly *in the direction in which Franklin was ordered.* Often would the memory of the year 1845 come before us; the plan of the Expedition and the departure of Franklin and his gallant followers; his Instructions, and their object, “the Passage.” How often we regretted that no rendezvous, no depôts upon which he might fall back with certainty of relief, had been arranged before he sailed; and then the complete failure of the expedition of 1848-9 would obtrude itself on us, and add still more pain to our anxiety. We had not a relative or friend, that we were aware of, in the Expedition; still, we felt the “great Question” on which they were engaged was England's—was ours—it was full of peril, and they were our countrymen, and therefore they claimed from us a feeling and a regard beyond all and every other expedition that had ever left our shores. For England's honour they went forth, and it was for her to recover them. But how? Not by flights of enthusiastic fancy;

* See the *New York Tribune*, 22nd May, 1850.

not by the doubtful impressions and influences of talked of "intentions," at variance with the Instructions; but by following in the track which *had been laid down for him as the best means of achieving the great object of his voyage*. Until we had done this, we felt all attempts were like pursuing the shadow of "a lifeless fire." These were our feelings in 1850. Our views as to the course the Franklin Expedition would take were simple, and formed on the Instructions given to him on his sailing, viz., *That he would proceed to Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait, and without stopping to "examine any openings northward or southward of that strait," that he would "push on" to the westward until he had reached the meridian of Cape Walker, or about 98° W., and the latitude of 74½° N.* Having attained that point, from thence he would penetrate the *unknown* Melville Sound, and endeavour to cross it in a southerly and westerly course towards Behring's Strait. As to the rumours of disaster and loss—whether crushed by the middle ice, destroyed by fire, wrecked by storm or by hidden rocks—none of these were confirmed; we, therefore, gave no heed to them.

It will be seen, from what we have said of the expeditions under Austin, Penny, Ross, and that of our American friends under De Haven, that their efforts would be confined to the examination of the passages north of Barrow's Strait; or if to the southward, west of the 98° of western longitude. But it having been suggested to Lady Franklin, that the western coast of Regent's Inlet and the western side of Boothia should be searched, under the conviction that Sir John Franklin, in retreating to the stores at Fury Beach, might adopt the route by the strait of James Ross, and crossing the isthmus into the Gulf of Boothia, *so reach* those important supplies, aided by several sympathizing friends, Lady Franklin purchased the *Prince Albert*, a vessel of 89 tons, the command of which was given to Commander C. Codrington Forsyth, R.N., who offered his services free of any remuneration. In her also went Mr. W. P. Snow, a volunteer: this gentleman had come purposely from America to join in this little expedition. The general instructions were, a thorough search of the west coast of Regent's Inlet to the Gulf of Boothia, the western side of Boothia into James Ross's Strait, and down to Simpson's Strait. The *Prince Albert* sailed from Aberdeen 5th June, 1850.* We cannot but say the arguments in favour of a search in this direction were reasonable; the strait of James Ross and the

* See "The Voyage of the *Prince Albert*," by W. Parker Snow. 1854.

isthmus of Boothia were *both known*, and offered fair facilities for escape from Melville Sound to Fury Beach. A "western sea," from the western side of North Somerset and Boothia was said to exist; at all events, the land or sea west of 95° W., between the parallels of 70° and 73° N., was undescribed.

28th September, 1850—The *North Star*, James Saunders, Master commanding, arrived at Spithead.* This vessel, loaded with provisions, had been despatched to Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait, 1849, with the hope of intercepting and preventing the return of the *Investigator*, Captain Bird. Additional Instructions had also been sent by her to Sir James Ross. The *North Star* failed to cross the middle ice, and was compelled to winter (1849-50) in Wolstenholme Sound. Being liberated in the spring (1850), she proceeded to Lancaster Sound, but being unable to reach Leopold Harbour, Jackson's Inlet, Ports Bowen or Neill, she finally landed the provisions "in a bay just within the easternmost Wollaston Island." The failure to communicate with Sir James Ross or Captain Bird defeated all the humane objects of the Admiralty. In the mean time, as we have shown, the *Enterprise* and *Investigator* had returned, and been sent to Behring's Strait; and another expedition, under Captains Austin and Ommaney, had been despatched to Barrow's Strait. We have often thought it had been much better had Mr. Saunders endeavoured to communicate with Captain Austin's squadron; he knew, from Captain Penny, they were in Lancaster Sound, and the season was not so far advanced but that he might have spared some little time to accomplish so greatly desirable an object.

The Hudson's Bay Company, 30th September, 1850,† received despatches from Sir John Ross, dated 13th and 22nd August previous, which were immediately forwarded to the Admiralty. The only matter worthy record here was the extraordinary report, of which the following is the substance :—"On the 13th August natives were discovered on the ice, near Cape York (Melville Bay), with whom it was deemed advisable to communicate. Lieutenant Cator, in the *Intrepid*, and Commander Phillips, with the Esquimaux interpreter of the *Felix*, were detached on this service." From Commander Phillips's subsequent reports to Sir John Ross we extract the following :—"As soon as the Esquimaux observed one of their own race in our boat, they ran to meet us, throwing up their hands, and

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 97, "Arctic Expedition," pp. 56—68.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 83—88.

expressing signs of satisfaction. . . . Our interpreter appeared to understand and be understood by them, and a long and earnest conversation took place, in which the gold-laced caps of some of the officers were alluded to." The subject of the conversation was said to be,—“In the winter of 1846, when snow was falling, two ships were broken up by the ice a good way off, in the direction of Cape Dudley-Digges, and afterwards burnt by a fierce and numerous tribe of natives. . . . The ships were not whalers, as epaulettes were worn by some of the white men. . . . A part of the crews were drowned; that the remainder were some time in huts or tents, apart from the natives; that they had guns, but no balls, were in a weak and exhausted condition, and were subsequently killed by the natives with darts or arrows." This appalling account was investigated on the spot, and Wolstenholme Sound was reached by Captain Ommaney; the wintering spot of the *North Star* was discovered, but nothing else was found to confirm the tragic tale of Adam Beck, Sir John Ross's interpreter. “On the report being cleared up,” in the words of Captain Penny, the whole of the searching ships pursued their original object, and crossed to Lancaster Sound. At the time, this report created much painful sensation; but it always seemed to us, much more than it deserved. We may notice it again on the arrival of the *Felix*.

The *Prince Albert*, Commander C. C. Forsyth, R.N., arrived at Aberdeen October 1st, 1850.* She brought the first intelligence that traces of the missing expedition had been discovered at Point Riley and at Beechey Island, by Captain E. Ommaney and officers of H.M.S. *Assistance* and *Intrepid*, 23rd August, 1850. Great was the joy and exalted the hopes of all, arising out of this, the discovery of the first traces of the *Erebus* and *Terror*. The *Prince Albert*, it will be remembered, had been sent by Lady Franklin to examine Prince Regent's Inlet; it appears she had been unable to reach Brentford Bay, having found the ice to extend from Fury Beach, across Regent's Inlet, to about Port Bowen. Commander C. C. Forsyth then returned, with the intention of proceeding down the western side of North Somerset, but found the pack extending across Barrow's Strait, from Leopold Island to the entrance of Wellington Channel. Foiled in getting to the westward, the *Prince Albert* returned, “being the last and smallest vessel that left England, and the first that arrived in Barrow's Strait;” and, it may be

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 97, “Arctic Expedition, 1851,” p. 68.

added, *the first home*.* However, the intelligence she brought was most important, as it cleared away all the rumours of disaster, of which it was said Baffin's Bay was the scene. The remains, ropes, &c., brought home by the *Prince Albert*, underwent careful examination, and were pronounced at once, from the marks, &c., as being British. The evidence subsequently offered by the graves of three men who had died at Beechey Island, belonging to the Franklin Expedition, confirmed the conclusion that that expedition had wintered there in 1845 and 6. An account of the trip of the *Prince Albert*, by Commander Forsyth, was read before the Royal Geographical Society of London, on November 11th, at the opening of the session, 1850-1. We have already remarked on the deep interest evinced by this Society for Arctic exploration; perhaps, of all the scientific bodies, none have shown for the solution of the "Great Problem" more steady feeling, or given greater aid to complete this truly British question, not only by encouraging the production and reading of "Arctic Papers" at its meetings, but also in the assistance rendered by the subscriptions of its presidents and fellows. We allude particularly to the search for the Franklin Expedition.† More than one plan has been materially aided and put into active operation in this humane cause by their example and liberality.

The labours of this distinguished Society are now beginning to be appreciated. Of their usefulness and important influence, in a maritime country like ours, there cannot exist a doubt, not only in advancing the spread of geographical knowledge, which, rightly understood, embraces "a vast field of study, in which collectively, all our arts, sciences, and pursuits are in close and obvious connection,"‡ but also as furnishing fixed and faithful data for the extension of commercial enterprise. Preceding Commander Forsyth's paper was one by Mr. Cartwright, which was simply an enumeration of recent Arctic voyages, and what had been done to recover our absent countrymen. The former, as we have said, was an outline of the voyage of the *Prince Albert*; it consisted of little more than a list of the dates of arrival and departure of that vessel on her passage out and home. The only portion of it worthy notice was the recent discovery of the first traces at Point

* This "*Voyage of the Prince Albert*," by Mr. W. P. Snow, was published 1851.

† Sir John Franklin was one of the Vice-Presidents of the Royal Geographical Society, and one of its most esteemed and talented members.

‡ See the President, Admiral W. H. Smyth's, Address, "*Royal Geographical Society's Journal*, 1850," p. lvi.

Riley and the wintering station of the *Erebus* and *Terror* at Beechey Island. As neither of these papers touched on the original plan of the voyage, or the course Sir John Franklin was likely to pursue (agreeable to his orders) after leaving Beechey Island, and as, hence, his probable position remained unindicated, and was left to be *fixed at the fancy or the will of any or every one*, however unacquainted, prejudiced, precipitous, or wild on the subject, we thought that any paper that should calmly and reasonably investigate the subject could not fail to be acceptable to the Society. Such a paper was at the time absolutely necessary, as opinions the most contradictory and absurd were prevalent. They embraced three-fourths of the compass, and were withdrawing attention from the true direction of search, —the direction in which Sir John Franklin was sent—from the south and west to the north, from Cape Walker to the Wellington Channel. In resolving, then, to furnish a paper, our object was, to recall attention to *the starting points—to the views entertained as to the question in the year 1845*—the Plan of Sir John Barrow and the Instructions founded upon it, to accomplish which Sir John Franklin and his gallant officers and crews went forth from amongst us.

We were aware of the scanty materials at command. We knew that beyond the Franklin Instructions, the failure down Peel's Sound, and the evidence of the just discovered traces at Beechey Island and Point Riley, these were all the materials existing upon which to work. The subject remained as it did in 1845; all beyond was *mere conjecture*, and the best evidence of its being so was shown in the monstrous notions then prevailing. To restrain wild theory, to aid reason, and to give hope where anxiety depressed, we set to work. Our paper (the original of which is before us) is dated 9th December, 1850. It is addressed to the then President of the Royal Geographical Society, Captain (now Admiral) W. H. Smyth, a gentleman alike distinguished for his highly scientific acquirements, his profound antiquarian lore, and his excellency of heart; in short, one of the first and most talented officers of that Navy of which we all are, or ought to be, so proud. We shall give running extracts from it. These will show our own views at the time, 1850, before Cape Walker had been reached; and from them, too, may be gathered *the prevailing tone* regarding the search for the Franklin Expedition, &c.

After alluding to the before named two papers, and the North-West Passage, now "of painfully absorbing interest by the long absence of the Franklin Expedition, . . . the critical position in which they may be placed, . . . the diversity of opinions . . .

on the subject, . . . the misconception as to the route taken and the present position and resources of Sir John Franklin . . . shown in the distracting plans offered for his relief." It then gives Franklin's Instructions, Sections 5, 6, and 7, which it fears "have not been sufficiently consulted," and yet "Sir John Franklin would read and follow them, and we must do the same if we would get on his trail." The inference drawn from the above sections is, "*That the Franklin Expedition was to proceed, first, direct to Cape Walker, and from thence . . . to the south and west, between Cape Walker and Banks' Land, with the view of reaching the open sea to the westward of 120° W., emerging probably between Wollaston and Banks' Lands;*" or, "secondly, that route being impracticable, from the presence of land or permanent ice, if, in passing the entrance of Wellington Channel," he "observed it to be open and clear of ice, he was at liberty to attempt a passage to the westward by that channel, or still to persevere to the south-westward." It should be remembered that at the time we wrote this (1850), there was the whole space between Cape Walker and Banks' Land (called Parry's or Melville's Sound) offering a fair prospect of a passage, the same as when Franklin sailed, equal, on the 74° parallel, to about 280 miles, and an opening to the south-west, between Wollaston and Banks' Lands, of perhaps 200 miles. With a favourable sea and wind, a few days of fortunate navigation would have brought Franklin to the meridian of 120° W., where it was known at the time there was an open sea, as, "beyond this, and to Behring's Strait, no land is visible from the American shore of the Polar Sea." The question of a North-West Passage would then have been at once settled and for ever. True, to the southward of the space above noticed lay Victoria Land, with its northern limits undefined. Still, Franklin's course was to the south-west; and it was thought not improbable, if drawn by circumstances more to the eastward, whether he might not find a passage eastward of Wollaston Land, between it and Victoria Land. But to return to the paper. Alluding to the rumour that the *Erebus* and *Terror* were lost in the middle ice, it says:—

"Fortunately, the traces recently discovered at Beechey Island and Point Riley, leave not a doubt as to the expedition having been there, . . . no doubt on its outward course to Cape Walker. . . . Whoever reads the Admiralty Instructions will notice how emphatically this cape is mentioned as being the first object for attainment; and Franklin, so zealous and alive to all that tended to the ultimate success of the expedition, would look to his arrival at Cape Walker

*with feelings of the deepest solicitude. It would be his first point to arrive at, and his last for departure. It would be his last known position for leaving despatches; it would separate the past from the future,—the past old and familiar, the future new and hopeful; it therefore would become invested with paramount interest. Scarcely a doubt arises but that he left Beechey Island or Point Riley under favourable circumstances for Cape Walker,—the distance is short,—and that he reached it. Assume he had been frozen up in the Straits, he would then have drifted to the eastward, and we should have known it; or, say he could not cross the strait to Cape Walker, he would then have returned to the northward, and left despatches on Beechey Island or Point Riley. Grant that he has been wrecked, still, one cannot conceive that both ships and their boats, and all the men, have been swallowed up at one ‘fell swoop,’ and left not a vestige: it is improbable. Cape Walker has been gained, and there are his despatches left. . . . His views would now turn to the southward and westward; based on Cape Walker he would commence his explorations, to achieve which he would make every sacrifice. Between Cape Walker on the N.E., Banks’ Land to the N.W., Wollaston Land to the S.W., and Victoria Land to the S.E., within this area will he be found.”** As regards the non-existence of despatches at Beechey Island, the following passage occurs. “The querulous have wondered that despatches were not left at Point Riley or Beechey Island. It should be recollected, Franklin, when he was at Point Riley or Beechey Island, *had done nothing*, and had consequently nothing to communicate; he was on old ground, and had not reached *its ultimate point, from whence he was to depart in search of the new*; he would consider further the possibility of Barrow’s Strait being frozen up, and his despatches not accessible; and as *his orders and course lay to the southward*, he would leave them on the south side of Barrow’s Strait, as Cape Walker could be more readily reached from Port Leopold (from the eastward) by land, if not practicable by sea, the land being then (1845) supposed to be continuous. . . . When Sir James Ross left his ships at Port Leopold on a land trip to the westward, it was with the hope of *reaching Cape Walker*. He could have had no idea that the land at Cape Bunny would have so changed its bearing—say at right angles to itself, and lead him directly south. I have little hesitation in adding, he never expected to find Franklin in that direction. . . .

* It will be seen from this note that we always considered that Franklin would persist in making westing and southing where he could between Cape Walker and Banks’ Land—agreeable to his Instructions.

Let us look around us from Cape Walker, and examine the nature of the lands already known; from them we may draw a reasonable inference as to what the lands are in a S.W. direction; that is, in the area I have already referred to. If one looks over a chart of this part of the globe, he will be struck with the extraordinary manner in which the land is broken up in all directions;—formed of primitive and trap rocks; the result of violent action is shown in the deeply indented, irregular inlets, jagged bays and islands; and when the climate is remembered, a reference to Dove's isothermal charts, and Parry's interesting papers on the temperature at Melville Island (in 1819 and 1820), will exhibit this tract as one of the coldest spots on our globe—a nucleus for the production of ice, with jagged, deep inlets to keep it *in situ*. When these are considered, the surprise is that so much has been done by our Polar heroes. In no part of the world is so disjointed, irregular a coast-line to be found, with such a climate. England may be unfortunate, having such enormous difficulties to contend with in solving the North-West Question; but the honour should and will be hers—our *Jack* will float through it one day.*

"With a country possessing such geographical features, and with a climate whose mean annual temperature is scarcely above zero, has the gallant Franklin and his noble fellows to contend. Ice-bound, but land-locked, and safe as regards his ships, he may not be able to retrace without abandoning them; which no Naval officer would do unless necessity, ever imperious, compelled him. Franklin and his crews would hold together as long as hope remained; that lost, he would retrace to Fury Beach or Port Leopold. . . . He would know Port Leopold was the most ready for access, for communication, and for succour from the eastward. As to going south, with the chance of obtaining supplies through the Hudson's Bay Company's territories, he would not; their inhospitable coasts would be fraught with too many painful reminiscences of the year 1819. No; if compelled to abandon he would look for a relieving expedition from the eastward, and Cape Walker would again become the spot about which all his hopes of rescue would turn.

"I have not a doubt but the missing Expedition will be found *in the space indicated*; and we know nothing, nothing of it, *because we have not reached Cape Walker*. As to resources, of this we have reasonable hope, the enormous migration of deer, oxen, birds, &c., &c.,

* Without pretending to the gift of prophecy, we may say our *Jack* has now been borne through the North-West Passage; not literally afloat in a ship or boat, but still afloat over water-borne ice, and it was done by British enterprise.

lead one to this cheering conclusion. ". . . All travellers by land on the north coast of America, and our Polar voyagers, too, by sea, confirm rather than dispel it. . . . Hungry men will eat almost anything; certainly would rather support existence by eating seals and even blubber, than perish. Here, again, let it be borne in mind that Parry, in 1819, got together 3,766 lbs. of provisions at Melville Island—*separated as it is by two straits from the American continent.**

"I will now assume that Franklin has been compelled to relinquish *all further attempt to the south-westward*, from the existence of land or permanent ice, shutting him out in that direction. In such case he would again consult his Instructions; which would result in his turning his attention to the north side of Barrow's Strait, and to the channels leading to the northward and westward between the Parry Islands.

"In reviewing the various passages leading to the consummation of the great object of the expedition, that between Melville Island and Banks' Land would be noticed, and at once rejected (see Section 6 of Franklin's Instructions). It is only in the event of Franklin being in a position *so far west as to see open water there, that he would attempt to get westward by that channel.* Wellington Channel would occur to him, and the state of the ice as he passed it on his outward passage; but the fact of despatches not having been found at Beechey Island or Point Biley, both admirable localities for leaving them, being on the south-eastern entrance of that channel, and the most accessible from the east, go to prove that it was seen to be ice-blocked when he passed it, and any attempt that way would end only in disappointment. He would therefore not attempt the Wellington Channel.

"We must, then, seek for him in or by one of the channels farther west; . . . that is, by one of the *straits formed by Bathurst, Byam Martin, or Melville Islands.* Thus far we have been guided by the Instructions, and the probable course of Franklin in his attempt to carry them out. The inferences are, we think, reasonable." The paper then continues the inquiry hypothetically: "Whichever outlet to the

* At the time Franklin sailed, and even up to 1850, the lamented Parry, Sir John Richardson, and Dr. Rae were considered the first authorities as to the abundance of animal life in the localities visited by them. Many other authorities might be given. Of course all lands, seas, and rivers are not alike prolific in animal life; because all parts do not produce life-sustaining matter, whether animal or vegetable. Sterile limestone, or primitive rocks, are scarcely likely to attract deer, the musk-ox, or birds.

north-west has been chosen, * . there I follow with the hope of fixing his present position; but as regards the nation's duty, no perils should dismay or arrest us in the prosecution of the search for the missing navigators. As to pecuniary expense, humanity forbids such sordid thought where life and honour are pending. Alive or dead, the fate of the Expedition should be known. I continue my inquiry, then, north about by the channels before-named; the same remarks apply to either." After quoting Capt. Fitzjames, who was "for edging north-west till in long. 140° W.," and the opinions of various Arctic authorities,—that of Col. Sabine, who thinks that "should they have succeeded in getting into the open water described by Wrangell, they may be as likely to come down on the Asiatic side as the American;"—of Sir Edward Belcher, who thinks "the probabilities are in favour of his safety until he reached the Arctic circle; there he would be reduced to the necessity of following any open channels which offered southerly, and they may have led him to the northward of Asia:"—the paper continues,—"I hope he will turn up in or near Behring's Strait; but when I refer to Dove's isothermal chart, and find the line of mean annual temperature at zero to the southward of the Parry group, I am led to infer that he would not be able to penetrate so far to the north and west as to be out of the reach of succour, either by retracing (with or without the ships) to some known headland, where he could obtain assistance in Barrow's Strait. . . Under fortuitous and most favourable circumstances he might reach so far north as to have the genial influence of that higher temperature which, from the continued presence of the sun acting on the extremes of our earth, has led to the idea of a Polar Sea free, or nearly so, of ice; in such a case the Polynia of Wrangell would tempt him to the west—but he would steer direct for Behring's Strait. . . Then a new difficulty arises, How would he get south again? The barrier of ice investing both poles between the 65° and 75° parallels would offer insuperable obstacles to his progress, rendered still more formidable by the land recently discovered to the northward of Behring's Strait by the *Herald* and *Plover*. But why enter on hypothesis? even should he be there we are not bereaved of hope; he might even then take to that permanent ice, and obtain relief and safety from Captain Collinson's expedition.

"I have thus endeavoured to trace Franklin and his noble fellows to the north; I have had to grope my devious way darkly; but when the position and configuration of the Parry Islands is duly considered, when the known severity of the climate is fully weighed, I think I

have not instituted an uninteresting, uninteresting inquiry, *but still my firm belief is that he is icebound in the area I have indicated, i. e., to the south and westward from Cape Walker, and that the expedition is safe.*" The paper then notices with regret the failure of the expedition under Sir James Ross, and with pleasure the sailing of that under Capts. Austin and Ommaney, and the hopes entertained from it; remarks on the generous kindness of our brethren of the United States; smiles at the Esquimaux, Adam Beck's report, and notes "the Skrellings of Scandinavian history have passed away;" hints at the tardiness of the Hudson's Bay Company, "*with their appliances at hand, and the Coppermine and Mackenzie flowing to and washing the lands holding Franklin and his gallant companions in detention;*" and concludes by referring to Dr. Rae's letter to Sir John Richardson, in which he says, "*the intervening space between the western points of Wollaston Land north to Banks' Land is to be searched by Commander Pullen.*" It will be seen that this paper is framed on the original Plan, and the Instructions founded on that plan—these had led to the appointment of Sir John Franklin, and it was and is presumed, that *by them* (i. e., the Plan and Instructions), he would be governed in his attempt to solve the "question of a North-West Passage." The paper takes a mere common sense view of what we might conclude Franklin would do, in the absence of all information as to what he had done. It takes for granted that he would follow his Instructions, and which, up to the time we write (1857), we have no proof that he has not done. We saw other and extreme views apart from the Instructions acquiring an undue importance, and we wished to arrest their progress. Our object in the paper was to recall the past, to bring back the recollection of the orders under which Franklin was acting, *the direction he was to proceed in*, and to show that, by following him in that direction, we should be pursuing the only reasonable course open to us. We believed by doing so we should trace and relieve him. The change of search from the south-west to the north-west we viewed with the greatest apprehension, *not only as turning our backs on Franklin and his crews, but also as fraught with disappointment, sorrow, and distress.* We therefore pointed out, that, although the Expedition might be unable to reach Cape Walker (from the accumulation of ice about it), still it would persist to make westing and southing, where it could, over the whole space between that cape and Banks' Land, and having gained the meridian of Melville Island—having attained such large westing, we felt assured that new ideas would arise in Franklin's mind, and make it questionable with him

whether, even though he should have seen Wellington Channel "open and ice-free" when he passed it, it would not be wiser to attempt one of the passages between the more western of the Parry Islands than to lose a season by retracing to Wellington Channel. All the passages between these islands, it was imagined, led into the same sea as Wellington Channel; and if the latter was free of ice, with a current setting to the eastward, it was only a fair conclusion that the western passages were free also; and therefore the large westing he had attained would place him in a better position for the ultimate successful completion of his voyage.

How far our views (1850) have been correct we leave others to judge; for ourselves, even at this time (1857), with all the additional information obtained during years of persevering daring and toil on the part of our sailors, we can see no reason to alter them materially. We still think the course we have indicated should have been followed, *i. e.*, we should have followed Franklin where we sent him. The absence of despatches at Beechey Island was *no argument that, hence, he had gone up Wellington Channel*. Franklin had not *then reached the first point of his Instructions*, Cape Walker, where they would be sought for. We may regret that no notices of his intended movements were left *there* (*query*, May he not have left despatches, and we have not found them?), but we *cannot, hence, conclude he went up that Wellington Channel*.

As we have before said, this paper was addressed to the President, and, as we have understood, it was (as usual in such cases) referred to an "Arctic authority," and considered "conjectural." So it was; but only in so much as it conjectured Sir John Franklin would follow the Instructions laid down for his guidance: the imaginists thought he would not. In thinking so, they forgot that they were rejecting the only guide they had to him. We had received no intelligence from Franklin. How could any one tell but what he was following out his orders to completion, and had partially succeeded?

It is now admitted on all hands that conjecture formed the basis of the majority of the plans of search for recovering the lost ones; if not, how is it that they vary so greatly in their direction? Let us glance at a few? We will commence with "Melville Island in the west." Has not the search been recommended from that island, including "all the passages between the Parry Islands, . . . Wellington Channel, . . . Jones's Sound, . . . to the great sound at the head of Baffin's Bay," and even *via* Spitzbergen? all this by the north, in face of Franklin's Instructions, and without a particle of evidence up to this period (1850), to prove that he was

unable to reach Cape Walker, and to get on to the south-west. Looking southward and commencing eastward, have not plans of search been proposed for an examination of the coasts extending from the southern limits of the whale fishery, Davis's Strait, to Hudson's Bay, Fury and Hecla Strait, both sides, and the bottom of Prince Regent's Inlet, Peel's Sound, Boothia, Back's Great Fish River, Victoria, Wollaston, and Banks' Lands, the entire examination of the Arctic American coast-line onwards to Behring's Strait, and, to crown the whole, even the strait between Melville Island and Banks' Land, from which Franklin was specially warned; altogether mixing the probable with the improbable in one distracting mass? Where was fact and evidence all this time? There was neither. Conjecture was busy with it all: she trampled on the Franklin Instructions, and sent reason beside herself. Let any one who has really gone into the question of Arctic discovery examine the various opinions that have from time to time been expressed; he must, indeed, be professionally blind, or much prejudiced, who does not at once admit that an expedition sent to a given place or spot, and from thence in a particular direction, if not heard from, or not returning, must be sought for at that place or spot, and in that direction. An analogous case in private life would be deemed a very simple matter. Then why, because public, should it be invested with so much gravity, and involve such contrariety of opinion? In the case of the Franklin Expedition, it was ordered to a given meridian and to a given parallel, and from thence in a specified direction. It has not been heard of since its departure from its wintering place, on its outward route. Various undoubted relics have been found, belonging to the Expedition, indicating the presence of a part of the suffering crews, but nothing positive as to the ships. The Expedition, as a whole, is wrapped in mystery. Various arguments have been raised as to its position, founded on its long absence, and great weight has been attached to them; but these should have been received with caution, especially as they were in regions where movement in ships is confined to a few weeks' hampered navigation. Then, again, long absence cannot annul, or make the Instructions a dead letter; it rather makes them more imperative, and of greater force. In seeking the Franklin Expedition, the sense of the Instructions given to it should have been adopted in the search. The Instructions, in short, are the only sure and safe guide to the whereabouts, or the fate of the missing Expedition. The "intentions" attributed to Sir John Franklin should have had no weight—they are not included in the orders under which he was directed to act; we therefore

could never see the reason for placing any value on them. To assume that he would attempt to carry them out, in face of his orders, derogates from the fair fame of this great commander. Not that we think he did not express his views and "intentions." The Wellington Channel and the open sea of Wrangell obtained much attention at the time (1845); it was thought to extend to the north of the Parry Islands, and induced a sanguine hope of success in that direction for the solution of the Question. But these "intentions" ought to have been regarded as after objects, after having failed in all attempts to reach Cape Walker and the south-west. We may rest assured, that with Sir John Franklin his Instructions were sacred, and not to be broken. Again, to act upon future intentions, which involved many points of difference of direction from that special point to which he was ordered, before we knew aught of the movements of the Expedition, was manifestly premature and wrong. These were our views at the time, and we have seen no reason to alter them. However, the Wellington Channel and Jones's and Smith's Sounds obtained (as we anticipated) almost entire possession of men's minds, and Cape Walker and the south-west were ignored. We feel, then, after what we have said, we may with propriety again ask the question, "Have we sought the Franklin Expedition in the right direction?"

The year passed away. It was a year full of activity; all deplored the protracted absence of our unfortunate countrymen; all looked with satisfaction on the magnitude of the efforts made for their relief and recovery; and though deferred, still from them they gained hope. The Government had certainly done its best to do right; had shown its feeling and its sympathy for both those abroad and at home. We cannot close the year better than in the words of Admiral W. H. Smyth, President of the Royal Geographical Society:—"The British nation has a right to expect that the Government of this great maritime country will do all in its power to carry succour to those so especially requiring it; and nobly has it met that expectation, as well in the outfits of the expedition as in proclaiming a munificent reward for those who find and relieve the sufferers. Whatever may be the result of these measures, one useful moral will be elicited. It will be shown, that when Englishmen are ready and willing to hazard their lives for their country's honour, they will not be neglected in the hour of peril."

* See "Anniversary Address, May, 1850," p. liii.

CHAPTER IX.

PLANS—ADMIRAL TAYLOR—MR. SNOW—BEHRING'S STRAITS EXPEDITIONS—REPORT ON THE EK-KO—"PRINCE ALBERT'S" SECOND VOYAGE—OBJECT—FULLEN AND CAPE BATHURST—LIEUTENANT BARNARD—MICHAŁOWSKI—AUSTIN RETURNS—PENNY RETURNS—COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY ON THEIR PROCEEDINGS—OMMANEY—OSBORN—BROWNE—ALDRICH M'CLINTOCK—REMARKS.

REAR-ADMIRAL TAYLOR, C.B. (4th January, 1851),* proposed to the Admiralty a combined land and water expedition, to examine all the fiords in Barrow's Strait and Banks' Land.

This is a lengthy, rambling, inconsequential, and yet hopeful paper, difficult to be understood; but so far as we are enabled to understand it, its object is to recommend a land and water expedition under the direction of his son, with "four Esquimaux and some of our own people, . . . provided with Esquimaux dogs and sledges, . . . seal-skin boats, . . . a schooner, and launch fitted as a steam-boat." With these he would undertake "to examine all the fiords in Barrow's Strait, from longitude about 80° to 100°; and if no tidings were discovered, would examine Banks' Land and all its fiords the following summer." We do not find their lordships took advantage of the well intentioned but not over-profound views of the author.

Mr. W. B. SNOW (late of the *Prince Albert*) next proposes (9th January, 1851) an expedition to proceed to Lancaster Sound and Griffith Island.† The object sought seems to be rather to bring home early information "from the vessels now employed in the Arctic Seas," than a distinct search for the Franklin Expedition.

January—Despatches were received at the Admiralty from the Behring's Strait expeditions, under the able management of Captain Kellet and Commander Moore; the strait *from Point Barrow had been completely swept*. They bear dates from the former, 14th October; from the latter, 2nd September, 1850. From these we extract the following:—The *Plover* wintered in Kotzebue Sound, during

* Blue Book, "Arctic Discovery, 1851," p. 96.

† *Ibid.*, p. 99.

which the Buckland and Spafarsif Rivers and Hotham Inlet had been visited. Various reports from the natives of ships and men on the northern coast.* In November, 1849, a native of Buckland River stated two ships, as large as the *Plover*, had, in the course of the summer of 1848, stood in shore to the eastward of Point Barrow, and were visited by some Esquimaux; but the water shoaling, the vessels put about to the northward, and were no more seen. This report was said to have been brought during the summer, 1848, by a native who had been on board, and who visited Kotzebue Sound every summer, but he was not met with by Commander Moore.

In April, 1850, Mr. Pim, having been despatched to Michaelowski, in Norton Sound, to obtain any information the Russian authorities might have relative to Sir John Franklin, brought a report from them to the effect that, in the summer of 1848, a party of two officers and ten men were on the north coast with two boats; they were in distress, and bartered their arms for provisions. This intelligence had reached Michaelowski through the Russian trading post on the River Ek-ko. In May, 1850, four natives arrived at Kotzebue Sound from the northward; one who had visited the ship before, and appeared to understand her mission, reported a number of people like ourselves "were a long way to the northward." A chief's son assured one of Commander Moore's officers there was no truth in this report, but others of the tribe maintained the truth of it. Immediately on the breaking up of the ice, the *Plover* proceeded to the northward to ascertain the truth of these reports. Arrived at Icy Cape, Commander Moore left the ships with two boats. At Point Barrow he was informed that a number of people had arrived at a river called the *Ko-pak*, or *Coo-pak*,—when, he was unable to discover; that they had bartered their arms for food; were now dead, and buried by the natives there. On being questioned as to the manner of their deaths, they appeared reluctant to answer. Commander Moore offered rewards to the natives to be guided to the spot, but they refused, excusing themselves by saying, "there were no huts on the journey at which they could stop." From what he could understand, he places the *Ko-pak* close to the Mackenzie. At Wainwright Inlet he "met a large number of natives just returned from the northward. Here he received further information of the two boats that were said to have arrived at the *Ko-pak*, or *Coo-pom-me*." The

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 97, "Arctic Expedition, 1851," pp. 28—34; et pp. 36—40.

crews had quarrelled with the natives, who had killed the whole of them, and had buried "some on one side the river, and the remainder on the other," and the arms collected "made a large pile; . . . that one of the boats still remained at the Ko-pak; the other had been washed away to sea. I made inquiries of a woman if she knew anything regarding the boats and men said to have been killed at the Coo-pom-me? and she said, No; and yet it was from her party (says Commander Moore) the men told us the news." Captain Kellett* "is of opinion that these reports have been entirely created by the anxiety of all on board the *Plover* to obtain information, which has caused the natives to be fully aware of the subject on which the strangers wished to be informed. The Esquimaux are quick; and where it is likely that their natural cupidity would be gratified, are ever ready, can they but get a lead, to exercise their ingenuity by inventing a story. . . . It was after he (Commander Moore) had made the chief of the Hotham Inlet tribe perfectly understand the object of the *Plover's* wintering in those regions, that the majority of these reports were received; only one, on which not the least reliance was placed at the time, had been reported previously. . . . The natives at Point Barrow had not actually seen either the ships or the graves, . . . but had learned the story from some natives who came from the Ko-pak, with whom they meet to barter, at a place distant from Point Barrow ten sleeps, or days' journey (about 25 to 30 miles each). . . . All these reports refer to the autumn of 1848; therefore, should there be any truth in them, Commander Pullen must have unravelled them in 1849." We may observe, Commander Pullen appears to have had no communication with the natives after leaving Return Reef; the truth or falsehood of these reports, therefore, could not be established, which is to be regretted. We know, on the authority of Sir John Richardson, that "the Esquimaux between Point Barrow and the Mackenzie carry on a traffic along the coast; the western party meet the eastern ones at Point Barter" early in August.† We have already noticed the rumours from Peel River:‡ how far these have any connection with the reports extending from Michaelowski to Point Barrow we cannot determine. "The whole of the small extent of coast accessible to ships (says Captain Kellett) at this moment (July, 1850) is

* See Parliamentary Papers, No. 97, "Arctic Expedition, 1851," pp. 20—21.

† *Ibid.*, No. 107, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 92.

‡ See *ante*, p. 89.

alive with them." However, there is nothing impossible in them. May not the Franklin Expedition, after leaving Beechey Island, 1846, have made large southing and westing, agreeable to its Instructions?

Despatches were also received from Captains Collinson (13th September, 1850) and M'Clure (28th July, 1850). The *Investigator*, Captain M'Clure, by a surprising passage from Oahu, had beaten her consort, and arrived first in Behring's Strait. She had been communicated with by the *Herald*, Captain Kellett, who was on board of her. He describes her crew "in excellent health and high spirits, and the ship in excellent order. . . . Everything in the right place." The *Investigator* was last seen by the *Plover* (5th August, 1850), latitude 70° 44' N., longitude 159° 52' W., steering to the north under a press of canvass, with a strong south-west wind. Captain M'Clure's intentions were,* "to make between the American coast and the pack, as far to the eastward as the 130° meridian, unless a favourable opening should earlier appear in the ice, which would lead me to infer I might push more directly for Banks' Land. . . . The season continuing favourable, it would be my anxious desire to get to the northward of Melville Island, and resume our search along its shores and the islands adjacent, as long as the navigation can be carried on, and then secure for the winter in the most eligible position which offers. In the ensuing spring, as soon as practicable for travelling parties to start, I should despatch as many as the state of the crew will admit in different directions, . . . to examine minutely all bays, inlets, and islands towards the north-east. . . . Supposing the parties to have returned (without obtaining any clue of the absent ships), and the vessels liberated by the 1st of August, my object would then be to push on towards Wellington Inlet (assuming that channel communicates with the Polar Sea), and search both its shores, unless, in so doing, some indication should be met with to show that parties from any of Captain Austin's vessels had done so, when I should return, and endeavour to penetrate in the direction of Jones's Sound, . . . and return to England."

It will be observed, the whole of the route Captain M'Clure lays down for himself is based wholly on the assumption that *Sir John Franklin has attempted the passage by a northern route; indeed, this northern route seems to have absorbed all other views, and yet no one*

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 97, "Arctic Expedition, 1850," p. 12.

knew the Franklin Expedition had failed to pass through Melville Sound to the south-west; it was all purely conjectural.

The *Enterprise*, Captain Collinson, having been delayed by light winds, did not reach Wainwright Inlet until the 15th August, 1850. Unsuccessful in falling in with the *Herald* or *Plover*, he at once stood to the north. He succeeded in rounding Point Barrow, and reaching 153° West, but was ultimately forced to return, beaten at all points by the insurmountable nature of the ice he met with, and, the 29th of August having arrived, he was compelled reluctantly to return to the southward. At Grantley Harbour he fell in with the *Plover* and *Herald*. Consulting with Captains Kellett and Moore, it was resolved the *Enterprise* should winter at Hong Kong.

The *Herald*, Captain H. Kellett, having returned to England, was this summer replaced in Behring's Strait by the *Dodalus*, Captain G. G. Wellealey, with similar instructions regarding supplying and assisting the *Plover*, Commander Moore.

The following report we copy from the *Leader*, 22nd February, 1851. The intelligence, it says, is contained in the *Colombo Observer*, under the date of Singapore, January 6th:—"I have it in my power, this month, to give you later information of the search which is being prosecuted for the recovery of Sir John Franklin and his party, than even the Admiralty itself is yet possessed of. H.M.S. *Herald* arrived here from the Arctic regions during the last week, and she has the latest accounts from the far north. Near the extreme station of the Russian Fur Company, they learned from the natives that a party of white men had been encamped 300 or 400 miles inland; that the Russians had made an attempt to supply them with provisions and necessaries, but that the natives, who are at enmity with the Russians, had frustrated all attempts. No communications could be opened with the spot where they were said to be, as a hostile tribe intervened. From the Esquimaux they had this vague story very satisfactorily confirmed, with the addition, that the whites and natives having quarrelled, the former had been murdered." This rumour is evidently another version of the report brought by Mr. Pim, obtained at Michaelowski, through the Russian station on the Ek-ko. The following memorandum, left by Sir John Richardson at the Admiralty, February, 1851,* probably refers to the above:—"The rumour now current (February, 1851) of white people being in the interior, cut

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 97, "Arctic Expedition, 1851," p. 105.

off from the Russians by a hostile tribe, I consider to be altogether a fabrication. The Russians have all the tribes in the north-west corner of the continent in subjection, and had so fifteen years ago, before their posts were extended so far north and east as they are now, when they come very near the Hudson's Bay Company's posts."

We have already noticed the failure of the *Prince Albert*, Lady Franklin's own schooner, to accomplish the objects of her first voyage down Prince Regent's Inlet in 1850. That lady, with a spirit not to be daunted by the ordinary course of events, resolved again to fit out that vessel; and this time it was to be commanded by Mr. William Kennedy, accompanied by Lieut. Bellot, of the French Navy, member of the Legion of Honour—a gentleman that was hereafter to distinguish himself, not only in his life but in his death; the veteran John Hepburn, the tried and gallant follower of Franklin and Richardson on their distressing journey down the Coppermine, was also of this party.

"The locality allotted for our search," says Mr. Kennedy,* "included Prince Regent's Inlet, and the passages connected with the western sea south-west of Cape Walker, to which Sir John Franklin was required in the first instance to proceed." The search was assumed to be necessary on the following grounds.

"1st. The probability of Sir John Franklin having abandoned his vessels to the south-west of Cape Walker.

"2nd. The fact that when Franklin sailed he believed an open passage was to be found from the westward into the south part of Regent's Inlet, according to the chart supplied to him from the Admiralty," and which does not exhibit the subsequent discoveries of Rae.

"3rd. Sir John Franklin would, it was thought, be more likely to take this course, through the country known to possess the resources of animal life, with the wreck of the *Victory* in Felix Harbour for fuel, and the stores at Fury Beach, further north, in view, than to fall back upon an utterly barren region of the north coast of America.

"4th. He would be more likely to expect succour by way of Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait, . . . than in any other direction." The *Prince Albert* sailed from Aberdeen, 22nd May, 1851.

This was an auxiliary search. Lady Franklin's anxiety for the search of Wellington Channel was well known at this time, but that object being secured by the Admiralty Instructions to Capt. Austin

* See "The Second Voyage of the *Prince Albert*," by W. Kennedy.

and Mr. Penny, she was then free to look and reflect on other, and we may add, certainly equally probable collateral directions. This design, taking in view our ignorance of the southern limits of Melville Sound, the trending of its coasts, and if any, the direction of the channels issuing from it; added to these, the supposed connection with Regent's Inlet for a retreating party, and the probable position of Franklin (south-west of Cape Walker), all these gave apparent promise of favourable results. But we think the search should have been limited southward to the Isthmus of Boothia; beyond all was doubtful. Back's River offered no advantages in its stream or in animal life, and Repulse Bay uncertain, because unexplored in 1845. This plan was far more reasonable than any evidence that could be advanced in favour of the Wellington Channel. The importance it was now acquiring rested solely on imaginative, rambling ideas, as to what the long absence of the Expedition had resulted in; its probable course, position, and resources: then came the bias and leaning of the inquirer. As to the Instructions, our only guide, *they were too clear*; something more abstruse was required, that dull monotony or routine might fix and waste itself on.

June, 1851.—Intelligence was received at the Admiralty from Lieutenant Pullen and Mr. Hooper* (of the *Plover*). It will be recollected they were directed to continue the search eastward of the Mackenzie River, &c., from Cape Bathurst to Banks' Land. They left Fort Hope 17th July, 1850; and after considerable delay from the heavy nature of the ice, they turned back (15th August), unable to reach Cape Bathurst. They arrived at Fort Hope (17th Sept.) UNSUCCESSFUL. Lieut. Pullen, in his despatch, thus ventures his opinion as to the position of the Franklin Expedition:—

"I hardly know what to say of the position of the lost voyagers, for I cannot think they are shut up in the supposed archipelago south-west of Cape Walker, and near Wollaston Land, without some of the Hudson's Bay posts hearing of them; for among so many, and Sir John Franklin knowing the coast so well, some would be ready to undertake the journey (for the distance cannot be very much more than 500 miles) to the nearest post, which is Fort Norman.

"Even could they once get to Bear Lake, Indians might be found ready to assist them.

"Again, Esquimaux about the Coppermine, and the coast in its

* Blue Book, "Further Correspondence and Proceedings, Arctic Expedition, 1852," pp. 33—64. See also a very interesting Journal, by Mr. Hooper, during the winter, 1849-50, pp. 143—186.

vicinity, hunt on Wollaston Land, and surely, if they had been near about them, or found any traces, Sir John Richardson and Mr. Rae would have heard of it." "I am strongly inclined to think, that after visiting Cape Walker and not finding the route practicable, they have left memorials, pushed through Wellington Channel; and thence westward, and are now shut up, far from land, between Melville Island and Point Barrow. My reason for this is, Capt. Fitzjames has so confidently expressed his opinion of that being the direction to be pursued, a route I think impossible to be accomplished. If the passage is ever to be made, it will be alongshore."

"Cape Walker, as well as every other likely place for making deposits of their proceedings, ought to be visited at all events."

The opinion thus given takes it for granted that Franklin has visited Cape Walker, and not finding the route practicable has therefore, at the very threshold, turned tail, abandoned his Instructions, which direct him to penetrate over a space of 17° of longitude, and gone up Wellington Channel. Very sound reasoning this, in the absence of facts!

Dr. Rae, in the summer of 1850, was to have renewed the attempt to reach Wollaston Land, and endeavour to get to the north, between it and Victoria Lands, and so on to Banks' Land; but there being an insufficiency of provisions for both Expeditions, the preference was given to Commander Pullen to carry out the route assigned to him. Dr. Rae's intention was to pass the winter of 1850—1 at Fort Confidence, and in the ensuing summer to search Wollaston and Victoria Lands.*

June 20, 1851.—Despatches were received from Capt. Collinson, of H.M.S. *Enterprise*, of December 23rd, 1850, and February 23rd, 1851.† The same rumours continued to be reported which we have already given; to which we add, "Capt. Moore informed me, a party of natives, who visited the *Plover* (at Port Clarence, Sept. 18th, 1850), had informed him that a vessel had arrived at a place called Noo-wak, some distance to the eastward of Point Barrow; that she was destroyed by the ice, and the people starved; a number of whom are represented to have been lying on the shore. . . . The vessel had three masts, and the wreck had taken place on the breaking up of the ice in the spring of 1849. . . . Feeling," says Capt. Collinson, "that an attempt might be made to reach the Polar Sea through the Russian Posts communicating with Michaelowski, I

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 97, "Arctic Expedition, 1851," pp. 51—56.

† Blue Book, "Arctic Expedition, 1852," p. 65.

availed myself of the offer of Lieutenant Barnard, who had previously volunteered, and determined on proceeding to Norton Sound for the purpose of landing him." This was done on October 12th, 1850. With him were left Mr. Adams (Assistant-surgeon), Thomas Cousins (Captain, maintop), who was with Sir John Richardson in 1848. "We also received information from a post in the interior that five Europeans and an officer had been seen by some natives, but the difficulty of communicating with the Russians rendered the information vague."

Capt. Collinson speaks highly of the kindness of the Russian authorities, Captains Tebenkorf and Rosenberg; the instructions given to Lieut. Barnard were, "As it appears to me desirable that the reports relative to white men having been seen on the shores of the Polar Sea should be thoroughly investigated, and as, by information received from Commander Moore, Michaelowski is greatly resorted to by native tribes who maintain a traffic along the coast to Point Barrow; it will be desirable that one, if not two, should remain at that place, while the others are proceeding to the posts in the interior, where it will be readily ascertained, . . . whether a communication is maintained with the Polar Sea, . . . and the feasibility of a party reaching the sea by this route in the ensuing summer. In the event of attaining any palpable information of the missing Expedition, you will endeavour to establish a communication with them, affording them information as to the deposits of provision, &c., &c."

At the latter end of the month of September, 1851, the public were greatly surprised by the unexpected return of the *Resolute* and *Assistance*, under Captains Austin and Ommaney, and the *Lady Franklin* and *Sophia*, under Messrs. W. Penny and Stewart.

The early return of these Expeditions led at first to the hope that farther and more favourable intelligence had been obtained of the course Franklin had pursued after leaving Beechey Island; but when it was known nothing additional had been discovered, hope gave way to surprise, despondence, and, we may almost say, to despair. It was thought, and fairly presumed, that having been the first to discover the traces, and to fix the safety of the Franklin Expedition up to its arrival and wintering at Beechey Island, thereby throwing overboard all previous reports and rumours of disaster on his passage thither, that now, having gained a clue, it would be perseveringly followed. It is true, opinions were divided as to whether he had followed a northern route or the direction in which the Instructions directed him; but as both routes were to be examined, it was concluded that,

failing to discover farther traces in one season, a second would be devoted to the same humane purpose; their return thus early was, therefore, considered altogether premature. The disappointment to the public, ever watchful, was consequently great; but it seems, at the close of the first travelling season, an estrangement of feeling, ill-defined at first, had arisen between the two commanders of these expeditions. A difference followed, and this difference led to estrangement; whether it arose from misconception or prejudice, or morbid sensitiveness, whether from disappointment and the uneasy, depressing influence arising from the want of success, or from whatever cause, these efficient, excellently-commanded Expeditions returned. It is not within our province here to go into the details of this unhappy result, we can only notice the effects produced on the public—everybody was disappointed. It was deeply and generally regretted, and the more so as both squadrons had, as will be seen in the sequel, made the most of the season they had been out, had earned credit to themselves, and done more to secure relief, and to trace and recover the object of their search, than any previous expedition. Alas! that with so propitious a beginning, the end should have had such opposite results, should have terminated so destructive to our hopes. These differences having become known to their Lordships,* the Admiralty very properly appointed a committee. This committee was "to direct their attention to and report on the conduct of the officers intrusted with the command of the late Expeditions, and the several exploring parties, and whether everything was done by them to carry into effect their Instructions, and to prosecute the search for the missing ships."†

As we have said, it would be beside our object to enter at great length into this painful subject. We therefore shall confine ourselves to the direction and results of the search in which the labours of these most indefatigable commanders were employed; for, notwithstanding what has been said, the organization of the travelling parties, and their persevering efforts, merited every praise, and were only too early closed. We cannot forbear here noticing one remark of their Lordships; they direct the particular attention of the committee to the return of the expedition from Cape Riley in this season, and they desire "a special report, "whether it would have been any ad-

* Blue Book, "Arctic Expeditions, Report of the Committee, 1851." See "Letters" from Mr. Penny, dated, 15th Sept. 1851, p. lv., and October 10, 1851, p. lviii.

† Blue Book, "Arctic Expeditions, Report of the Committee, 1851," p. x.

vantage if Capt. Austin and Mr. Penny had remained a further time to continue the search in that direction?"—evidently showing their leaning in favour of a continued northern search by Wellington Channel. We cannot but think it had been more agreeable to reason, had they desired a special report as to the advantages of prosecuting further search in the direction of that space from which the design of the voyage originated, and upon which Sir John Franklin's Instructions were founded; and the more especially, as not a jot of evidence existed from which to prove that he had, from untoward circumstances, been compelled to depart from them. But we turn to the Expedition under Capt. Austin: from the time of his sailing, the whole conduct of this gallant officer is marked for approbation. His careful thought, and determination to carry out the great object of the expedition, is shown in the various systematic and judicious arrangements made for extended search; they stamp him as possessed of no ordinary mind. In these he was fully aided and supported by his able second, Capt. E. Ommaney, and in justice to them we are bound to add, by the whole of his excellent officers and crews. The Expedition had not arrived on the ground from which was to commence that series of important operations afterwards so fully carried out, when a general memorandum, dated at sea, lat. $75^{\circ} 25' N.$, lon. $61^{\circ} 34' W.$, July 25th, 1850,* was issued by Capt. Austin to the officers commanding the vessels under his orders. We notice it as a prelude to what might be expected hereafter from such an officer. The preamble runs, "In the hope that the Expedition is now not far distant from the north water, and although the nature and movements of the ice are so varied in different seasons as to prevent any determination of plan, until the moment for acting arrives, it becomes desirable that what is contemplated in the prosecution of the charge assigned to me (the accomplishment of which we all have so much at heart), should be made known, I therefore promulgate it, and it is to be received as an addendum to the Instructions issued by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and carried out with all the earnestness and zeal that so highly an important service demands." This valuable document provides arrangements for the course of search to be adopted. Under the idea that the crews of the missing ships would retreat by way of Lancaster Sound and Pond's Bay, it provides for the search of and from Pond's Bay to Whaler Point, on the South side of Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Strait; and from Cape War-

* Parliamentary Papers, No. 97, "Arctic Expedition, 1851," p. 93.

render to Wellington Channel, and its entrance on the north. Capes Rennel and Walker and the south-west, and on to Melville Island, are specially noted, as also the Parry Islands—places of rendezvous, and for leaving notices, are fixed and named, and especially Griffith Island; as also is Winter Harbour, as their winter quarters. Altogether, this document is most complete; one more excellent we have seldom read. To Capt. Penny was left the examination of the northern part of Wellington Channel. Capt. Austin's Expedition did not succeed in getting much farther west than Griffith Island; it was, therefore, chosen as their winter quarters. Scarcely were the ships frozen fast (September, 1850), when a series of preliminary journeys were commenced to deposit provisions in advance, for the use of the travelling parties in the ensuing spring. All the orders show the desire of Capt. Austin to carry out, to the extreme limit, the great object of the expedition, the search for and recovery of the missing Franklin and his companions, with due regard to the preservation of the gallant officers and men by whose unflinching exertions the hoped-for success was to be achieved. The spring came, and with it another general memorandum,* rousing to preparation, and giving a general plan of operations for search by travelling parties (March 10th, 1851). The principal search was confided to his second, Capt. Ommaney, and in the right direction, because, in the direction of Sir John Franklin's Instructions, from "Cape Walker to the south-west." Most ably was it executed under that excellent officer. Having reached Cape Walker, without finding any traces of Franklin, he continued the examination of the coast west and south until he attained a position about 101° W.; from thence he despatched Lieut. (now Capt.) S. Osborn on an extended search to the westward, whilst he examined a deep bay, since distinguished by his name. Capt. Osborn succeeded in reaching $103^{\circ} 25'$ W. In the meantime Cape Walker was found to be an island, separated by a strait explored by Lieut. (now Commander) Meham; and the western coast of Peel's Sound to $72^{\circ} 49'$ N., was examined by Lieut. Browne; several islands in the offing were also examined. Capt. Ommaney remarks in his report,† "The coast which I have searched being exactly in the route where Sir John Franklin was instructed to seek a passage to the American continent, much importance must necessarily be attached to the nature of its shores, and the chances of its being practicable for ships to navigate in that direction. . . . The character of

* Blue Book, "Arctic Expedition, 1851," Additional Papers, &c., p. 10.

† *Ibid.*, p. 27.

the land is very low. . . The nature of the ice along its shores is mostly of old formation. . . Little indication of tide. . . Shoals abound along the coast, and there was no place where a ship could obtain shelter. On that part most exposed to the north there were masses of grounded floe-pieces, quite forty feet in thickness. . . . After giving my best attention to the subject, and from all that passed under my observation, it is my opinion that the coast is unnavigable for ships. The distance travelled by my party amounts to 480 miles, of which I have traversed 200 of newly-discovered coast." Lieut. Osborne observes,* "From 101° to 105° W. the floe, in addition to its exhibiting the same aged appearance, . . . had evidently been subject to enormous pressure, by which large blocks, many tons in weight, were thrown up, one on the other, in wild confusion. . . I beg to express, as my opinion, that at no period of the year can there be a navigable sea for ships in the neighbourhood of the coast along which I travelled westward of Cape Walker." And lastly, Lieut. Browne, in travelling down the west side of Peel's Sound, remarks,† "from the state and appearance of the ice in the Strait (Sound?) and in the bays along the coast, I think it unlikely that any ship could penetrate to the southward through this channel." Again, "shortly after leaving Cape Walker, the ice becomes smooth, continuing so right up to the land; no tide-mark could be observed, giving me the idea that the floe was frozen solid to the bottom. . . This was the case in all the bays around which I travelled, and confirms me in the original impression. Proceeding along the east coast of the islands (about 73° N.), the ice is very smooth, close up to the cliffs. . . This ice appears to be of old formation; and but small pressure to be perceived along the coast;" from "the state of the ice . . . it is my opinion that this channel is rarely, if ever, sufficiently open for the purposes of navigation."

That this south-western division was well conceived, and well carried out under Captain Ommaney, not a doubt exists; that it was continued as far to the west as the means of the Expedition and the state of the ice (from returning spring) permitted, is equally certain. Still, every effort failed to discover any farther traces of the missing Expedition. But the failure to discover traces at Cape Walker and westward to 103° West was no proof that Franklin had given up all hope to the southward and westward, and therefore returned: much less was it proof that he never attempted the passage by Cape Walker

* Blue Book, "Arctic Expedition, 1851, Additional Papers," p. 102.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 30 and 75.

and the south-west at all—a conclusion afterwards come to by Captain Austin. Captain Ommaney and his parties simply proved that Franklin had not communicated with Cape Walker and the coast westward to 103° West; but it should have been remembered that there was the greater part of the space to be examined upon which was founded the original design of the voyage, extending from 108° to 115° West (to Banks' Land); that space (as yet unexplored) comprised 12° of longitude, = about 216 miles, and even under its reduced form offered every prospect of a passage.—(See Chart, Austin and Penny's Discoveries.)*

The search by the south-west may be said virtually to have closed with the return of Captain Ommaney's parties. Previous to the journey of this excellent officer, no attempt had been made to reach Cape Walker, or to follow the Franklin Expedition in the direction in which it was ordered (see Section 5 of his Instructions); and yet six years had passed, and it was known that the Expedition was only victualled for three, may be, to be eked out to five years at farthest. How shall we account for this most unjustifiable procrastination? Those six years—full of anxiety, of hope, of fear, at home—might be fraught with the most distressing consequences to Franklin and his gallant fellows—consequences one shudders to think on. But this procrastination led to other and most baneful effects. Because Franklin did not return unassisted, it led to all sorts of speculation as to the causes of his prolonged absence, and the most improbable inferences and conclusions as to the position of the Expedition. The Instructions given to Franklin for his guidance, and the only guide we had to him, were now to be cast aside, and the result was, as might have been foreseen, all was left to conjecture;—hence followed the visionary plans and schemes for his recovery. This delay speaks unfavourably as to the soundness of our feeling and solicitude for the missing ones; and yet all were really anxious, and full of fearful anticipations of distress, of sorrow, and of death. But the truth is, notwithstanding the earnest desire to adopt the best and most efficient means for the recovery of our long-absent countrymen on the part of the Admiralty and the public, still the subject (otherwise simple) became so involved and confused by the opposing and distracting variety of the plans, schemes, and theories offered, that sound thought retired confounded, and conjecture ruled—and, unhappily, was still to rule. But we digress.

* Blue Books, "Arctic Expedition, 1851," Report, &c., at the end.

We will now turn to the northern and western divisions of this excellently arranged Expedition. They equally claim our admiration. The southern extremes and the passages between the Parry Islands were explored up to $76^{\circ} 28'$ North, and westward to and beyond 114° West; and Lowther, Garratt, Young, and other islands were examined. New lands were discovered to the westward of their farthest western limit; but still, unhappily, not a vestige was obtained to indicate that the Franklin Expedition had been there. All these parties were admirably conducted by their respective officers, equalled only by the zeal and persevering activity of their crews. Where all behaved so well in the holy cause, it were invidious to select; still we hope not to offend any when we mention Lieutenants Aldrich and M'Clintock, and Mr. Bradford, the surgeon of the *Resolute*. Lieutenant (now Captain) M'Clintock particularly distinguished himself in his very extended journey to the westward of Melville Island, to Liddon Gulf, and by new discoveries further to the westward. However unfortunate all these parties were in failing to clear the mystery hanging over the fate of Franklin and his gallant companions, their zealous, persevering labours were not altogether lost. Alas! that they told us only where he was not; still they were in the right direction. Franklin was ordered to longitude 98° West, and latitude $74\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ North, and thence to the south-west. He had reached Beechey Island, on his outward route; who could say but that, shut out from the south, he might have made westing, and reached Melville Island? This island had not been visited; it was, therefore, most important that it should be examined. The following table will best show the extraordinary and prolonged efforts of the travelling parties of this excellently managed Expedition.

ALONG SOUTH SHORE.

Officer in command.		No. of Crew.	Days out.	Miles travelled.	Miles of Coast searched.		Extreme point reached.	
Name.	Rank.				Newly discovered.	Old.	Lat. N.	Long. W.
Erasmus Ommaney .	Captain. . . .	6	60	480	205	—	$72^{\circ} 44'$	$100^{\circ} 42'$
Sherard Osborn, Esq.	Lieutenant. . .	7	58	506	70	10	$72^{\circ} 18'$	$103^{\circ} 25'$
Wm. H. Brown, Esq.	Lieutenant. . .	6	44	375	150	—	$72^{\circ} 49'$	$96^{\circ} 40'$
Geo. F. Mechem, Esq.	Lieutenant. . .	6	29	236	80	—	—	—
Mr. Vesey Hamilton.	Mate.	7	28	198	—	23	—	—
Mr. Charles Fds. . .	Asst.-Surgeon .	6	20	175	—	—	—	—
Mr. Fred. J. Krabbé.	2nd Master. . .	7	13	116	—	—	—	—
Geo. F. Mechem, Esq.	Lieutenant. . .	6	23	238	—	75	—	—
Mr. Fred. J. Krabbé.	2nd Master. . .	6	18	110	—	—	—	—

ALONG NORTH SHORE.

Officer in command.		No. of Crew.	Days out.	Miles travelled.	Miles of coast searched.		Extreme point reached.	
Name.	Rank.				Newly discovered.	Old.	Lat. N.	Long. W.
Rob. D. Aldrich, Esq.	Lieutenant . .	7	62	550	70	75	76° 18'	104° 30'
F. L. M'Clintock, Esq.	Lieutenant . .	6	80	760	40	215	74 38	114 20
A. R. Bradford, Esq.	Surgeon . . .	6	80	669	155	30	76 23	106 15
Mr. R. B. Pearce. . .	Mate	7	24	208	—	—	—	—
Mr. Walter W. May.	Mate	6	34	371	—	—	—	—
Mr. W. B. Shellabear.	2nd Master. . .	6	24	245	—	—	—	—
Mr. John P. Cheyne.	Mate	7	12	136	—	—	—	—
R. C. Allen, Esq. . .	Master	7	18	137	—	25	—	—
R. C. Allen, Esq. . .	Master	5	7	44	—	—	—	—
Mr. Walter W. May.	Mate	5	6	45	—	—	—	—
Mr. Geo. F. M'Dougal.	2nd Master. . .	7	16	140	95	20	—	—
Mr. Geo. F. M'Dougal.	2nd Master. . .	6	18	198	—	—	—	—

Having endeavoured to do justice to the able management, the extraordinary exertions, and the excellent conduct of all concerned in the Expedition under Captain Austin, we now give that officer's opinion, derived from the results of his travelling parties. It is given in the "Report of his Proceedings to the Admiralty" (dated Grif-fith Island, 14th July, 1851),*—"Having now carefully considered the direction and extent of the search (without success) that has been made by the Expedition, and weighed the opinions of the officers when at their 'extremes,' I have arrived at the conclusion that the Expedition under Sir John Franklin did not prosecute the object of his mission to the southward and westward of Wellington Channel, and therefore deem it unnecessary to attempt the prosecution of any further search to the westward." We have given ourselves some trouble to ascertain upon what ground Captain Austin comes to this conclusion, but have not been enabled to discover any reason. The explorations of Captain Ommaney's parties prove that Sir John Franklin did not communicate with Cape Walker, nor with the coast to the westward and southward to 108° West; and that officer, in his Report, furnishes good and cogent reasons why he could not, if he would. He says, "The land is low; . . . shoals abound;" and "the coast is unnavigable for ships;" therefore, if Franklin had had the wish to get to the south and west (between the ice and the shore, as has been pronounced the most advantageous by some), he would have found it impracticable here. But this fact does not lead to the con-

* Blue Books, "Arctic Expedition, 1851, Report of Committee," &c., p. xvi.

clusion that he gave up all hope of penetrating to the south-west; he might still have been enabled to get to the westward, agreeable to the option given him, Sect. 6 of his Instructions. We have always thought he did so, and that he endeavoured to make a general south-west course. To suppose that, because he could not reach Cape Walker, he immediately returned, and abandoned the voyage, seems absurd. The absence of all traces at Melville Island certainly surprised us; but the arduous labours of Lieutenant M'Clintock were not altogether fruitless;* he confirms the opinion of Parry, 1819—20, as to the impracticability of getting to the westward between that island and Banks' Land, and the favourable prospects presented of getting to the south-west to the eastward of Winter Harbour; but the very absence of despatches proved that the Franklin Expedition had not made such large westing—had, in fact, not succeeded in reaching that island, or, most assuredly, we should have found records of his visit at the now celebrated sandstone at Winter Harbour (Parry's): the only inference, then, to be drawn from this was, that we must look for the missing Expedition more to the southward and eastward from that island. Lastly:—The unsuccessful search along the southern shores of and between the Parry Islands may be accounted for, on the supposition that Franklin, in persevering along the northern edge of the ice of Melville Sound for a passage to the south-west, was too far distant, or under too favourable circumstances to admit of delay, and, therefore, did not communicate with those islands. After a careful consideration of all these circumstances at the time, the general inference we drew was—that Franklin, after leaving Beechey Island, attempted to reach Cape Walker, and was shut out from there; that, having a favourable prospect to the westward, he persisted in that direction, endeavouring to penetrate to the south-west, along the whole space between Cape Walker and Banks' Land; obtained large westing and some southing, until within the influence of that south-east drift noticed by Parry in 1820 to be always setting past Melville Island; he there got entangled in its heavy masses, and ultimately locked in. We have, notwithstanding all that has transpired since, seen no valid reason for altering this opinion, and we therefore conceived this to be the true direction for search.

From this view of the search and results of Captain Austin's travelling parties, we must, necessarily, differ from his conclusion. It

* See Blue Books, "Arctic Expedition, Report of Committee, 1851," p. 88.

will be seen we do not regard the absence of *traces in the particular localities visited as any proof that Franklin did not, or was unable to, follow out his Instructions.* Had Captain Austin's parties completed the *examination of Melville Sound*, it would for ever have set the *question at rest, whether the missing ships had penetrated in that direction or not.* The examination of that Sound being left incomplete, left the matter open to doubt—not the doubt of the caviller—but Franklin having been sent there, there we should hope to find him. We have often regretted that an Expedition composed of such efficient officers and crews—so united, so daring, and so persevering—altogether animated with such excellent feelings—that it should not have been kept together, and its services prolonged for another year. We have often considered it unfortunate that two of the vessels were not enabled to reach Melville Island, and, from that advanced position, have despatched travelling parties to Banks' Land and eastward, to meet the parties from Cape Walker. With his admirable arrangements, and able officers and crews, we have no doubt farther traces of the lost Expedition would have been found, which would have led to the development of the sad mystery. A communication with M'Clure's parties might have been effected, and Captain Austin might have shared with that officer the honour of discovering the North-West Passage. But it was not to be.

We cannot part with this much abused Expedition without expressing the high opinion we have of the talents and judicious arrangements of its commander, Captain Austin—the zeal and perseverance of his able second, Captain Ommaney—and the activity and able management of the officers. The conduct of the crews is marked in their diligence, kindly bearing and generous feelings towards their officers and each other, often under difficulties and privations at times extreme;—it is above all praise. Each and all seem to have felt and acted under the sacred influence of a holy cause. They deserved success; but it is not given to mortals to command it.

We will now give the results of Capt. Penny's Expedition. It will be remembered that he was to explore Jones's Sound and on to the Wellington Channel, the Parry Islands, and Cape Walker, and, failing all these, to attempt (circumstances permitting) Smith's Sound. Capt. Penny was equally fortunate in the selection of his officers; being ably assisted by Capt. Stewart and his other officers, and by willing and persevering crews. Capt. Penny, being prevented from approaching Jones's Sound by a chain of immense floes extending out twenty-five miles from its entrance, made the best of his way

up Barrow's Strait, discovered the graves at Beechey Island, and wintered in a harbour on the south side of Cornwallis Island, since called Assistance Harbour. Capt. Penny undertook the examination of the Wellington Channel. Depôts were laid in advance, and the spring travelling parties started on their several journeys May 5th, 1851, under well-arranged travelling instructions.* They searched both sides of Wellington Channel. About forty-five or fifty miles north from its entrance, they found it to extend east and west, and open water was discovered there early in the season. Subsequently, the eastern coast was examined, and its limits ascertained to run to the eastward in places to 91° W., and north to lat. $76^{\circ} 25'$ N.; forming a gulf, enclosing several extensive bays. To the west, Cornwallis Island was found to change its trending gradually round to the west, until its northern coasts lay in a nearly east and west direction; it ultimately curved round again to the north-west. Between Cornwallis Island and the northern land, an open sea was seen before them, running in the same (north-west) direction. A cluster of islands, situated about 76° N. and 96° W. divided the broad channel (nearly fifty miles in width at this point) into several navigable passages for ships. Captain Penny explored the land to the north, and coasted the intermediate islands, reaching the northern land about lat. $76^{\circ} 20'$ N., and long. 97° W.

Capt. Stewart and Dr. Sutherland explored the coast from the northern entrance of the Wellington Channel east round by the north to lat. $76^{\circ} 17'$ N. and long. $92^{\circ} 20'$ W.; when Dr. Sutherland returned, on his way examining the bottoms of various bays and islands. Capt. Stewart continued the search, and ultimately reached a point in lat. $76^{\circ} 20'$ N., and long. 97° W.

Messrs. Goodsir, Marshall, and Manson examined the northern coast of Cornwallis and Bathurst Islands (which were found to be united) as far as long. 99° W.

Mr. John Stuart searched the eastern side of Wellington Channel, and reached Cape Hurd in Barrow's Strait.

The distances travelled by these energetic officers and their crews during April, May, and June, range from 400 to 932 miles. When it is considered that this was done on entirely new ground, not a doubt can be entertained but that each and all did their duty. It was, therefore, the more deeply to be regretted that any misunder-

* See Blue Book, "Arctic Expedition, 1851, Additional Paper," pp. 303-387. Also the Appendix to the "Journal of a Voyage to Baffin's Bay, and Barrow's Strait, by Dr. Sutherland," vol. ii., p. v, to cxi.

standing should have arisen, or seeming want of co-operation between the chiefs of these admirably conducted Expeditions, and the more especially on such a mission; but want of success has soured energetic minds under far more favourable circumstances of climate and life-sustaining comforts. Prolonged exertion, battling with ice and snow, cold and wet, have a disheartening influence, and more so where hope is not cheered onward by some prospective assurance that the right track has been obtained, leading to the object sought. Unhappily, their labours were altogether unrewarded by such discovery. Great excitement was produced at the time by a piece of elm that was picked up at Hamilton Island, but on careful examination no inference could be drawn that it had belonged to the Franklin Expedition.

We have never attached any importance to Wellington Channel as a route adopted by Sir John Franklin, still the opinion of others, who think he did make an attempt that way, should have their just weight, especially those who explored it. It is difficult to come at Penny's decided opinion. We give a few extracts from his travelling Report, May 16, 1851;* he says, "The moment I passed over Point Surprise the expression that escaped me was, 'No one will ever reach Sir John Franklin; here we are, and no traces are to be found.' . . . So we returned to the sledges very much disappointed." Again, July 19, 1851, near Cape Becher; "I took another view of the expanse of water that was before my eyes; oh, to have been here only with my two little vessels, what could we not have done in the way of search? but I greatly fear, if we had, the missing ships are beyond our reach. . . . Had Sir John Franklin left documents, surely he would have done so upon this headland or Dundas Island. We found none." The following note was made at the same place:—"It was a severe struggle to leave the search, but there was no other course left; that the missing ships had gone beyond our reach, I had no doubt; for if they had not, then we should have found traces of them about some of the Bird Heads, or Duck Islands." These extracts lead us to infer that Captain Penny thought that Franklin had passed to the north by the Wellington Channel, and had gone beyond the reach of search (at least with his means); and yet he failed to discover a single positive trace of the course of the Expedition to lead him to such a conclusion. It was an impression, but impressions mean nothing; they will not suffice, where proofs are required. Impressions with ardent minds soon ripen into belief; and so we find it. On

* See "Journal of a Voyage to Baffin's Bay, &c., by Dr. Sutherland," vol. ii, pp. 132, 178—9.

August 10th, 1851, the following passage occurs:—"Again and again he said, that he would neither be responsible for bringing the search to a close, nor for jeopardizing the lives of upwards of 220 men, by leading them up the Wellington Channel, in the very foot-steps, as he believed, of the unfortunate Franklin and his adventurous companions. He could not convince others to the same extent as he believed it himself, that the missing ships had taken that route. But he looked forward to an early meeting with Captain Austin, and said, that after he had given an outline of what had come under his observations in the Victoria Channel, he should at once propose a continuation of the search, . . . through the Wellington Channel." Capt. Austin came; the commanders consulted:—"It was a most important duty; . . . not only did the destinies of our . . . ships and their crews hang upon the decision to which they should come, but also the fate of those who might still be looking for help. . . . All that Mr. Penny could or did say failed to convince him of even the faintest probability that the missing ships had taken that (the Wellington Channel) route. He gave his opinion that had he done exactly as Mr. Penny's Expedition had done, and were he placed in the position which Mr. Penny occupied, he should not hesitate to conclude at once that the *search for the missing ships* need not be prosecuted to the north-west of their winter quarters at Beechey Island, a direction which he believed they had never taken. . . . Mr. Penny had no means of satisfying Capt. Austin, with respect to the opinion he (who had been in and beyond the Wellington Channel) entertained of the route they took from their winter quarters. This opinion he could not base upon anything more substantial than ideas suggested by the experience he and those engaged on the same route had acquired. To all appearance it had no tangible relation whatever to the missing ships, and not a single unexceptionable fact could be brought in to substantiate it. . . . Capt. Austin was satisfied the missing Expedition need not be searched for to the due west or north-west; and Mr. Penny, uncertain whether they had proceeded up the channel, could hold out no hopes of our being able to accomplish anything worthy the inevitable risks of a second winter."† Capt. Austin, requesting Mr. Penny's opinion in writing, after some demur, August 11, 1851, he wrote the following laconic reply; "Your question is easily answered. My opinion is, Wellington Channel requires no further search. All has been done in the power of man

* See "Journal of a Voyage to Baffin's Bay, &c., by Dr. Sutherland," vol. ii. p. 301.

† *Ibid.*, p. 304—6.

to accomplish, and no trace has been found. What else can be done?"

It is difficult to reconcile all these differences of opinion; and therefore we do not attempt it. Captain Stewart argues the question to our views much more rationally in his valuable report:—"That Sir John Franklin may have gone up Wellington Channel, is not at all impossible; I would (after having seen it) myself, if seeking a passage to the north-westward, seek for it in that channel. But the circumstances of the Wellington Channel, and the shores and islands of the more intricate channels to the north-west of it, having been thoroughly searched without finding any traces of the missing ships, goes a great way to refute the idea that they have gone in that direction. This circumstance, together with the late period at which the ice breaks up in Wellington Channel, on one side, and the early period at which open water was found to the northward, coupled with the first winter quarters of the ships at the mouth of the channel on the other side, leaves the question in the same doubt and uncertainty as ever." This opinion involves several considerations; the chief of which is, Did Sir John Franklin, in the hope of solving the question of a North-West Passage, adopt the Wellington Channel? We all know that he was specially enjoined by his Instructions "not" to "stop to examine any of the openings to the northward or southward in Barrow's Strait, but to continue to push to the westward without loss of time, in the latitude of about $74\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, till" he had "reached the longitude of that portion of land on which Cape Walker is situated, or about 98° W." With these Instructions before him, and ever uppermost in his mind, is it likely that he would stop until he had reached the point so particularly specified? The season of 1845 may have closed before he reached it, forcing him to winter *en route*; still all his thoughts would centre on Cape Walker. We know he wintered on the eastern side of Wellington Channel, at Beechey Island; but is that any proof that he attempted the passage by that channel? We think not. He had not fulfilled the first part of his Instructions; Cape Walker was yet to be reached; the south-west yet to be attempted. With these unaccomplished, we cannot think that he looked to the north at all, much less that he adopted the Wellington Channel. Show us that he had attempted and failed altogether to the west and south, prior to his taking up his winter quarters at Beechey Island, then the question of his adoption of the Wellington

* See Blue Books, "Arctic Expedition, 1851, Additional Papers," p. 316; and "The Journal of a Voyage to Baffin's Bay, by Dr. Sutherland," vol. 2, p. xxvii.

Channel route may be entertained; but the very idea that he had made the attempt and failed, thus early in the season; never entered the heads of even the most strenuous of the Wellington Channel advocates. We must conclude, then, that when Franklin was at Beechey Island, he considered himself merely *en route* to Cape Walker, and, therefore, would not admit even the thought of a passage by the Wellington Channel. But let us inquire, from his winter quarters, which presented the better prospect of realizing the object of the voyage—the route by Wellington Channel, or that by Cape Walker, and the south-west (the direction of his Instructions)? We will assume that Franklin was aware of this open water to the north of Wellington Channel, but interposed between it and Beechey Island there was a barrier of ice of some thirty miles in extent, which barrier does not break up until late in the season, sometimes not at all; the period for navigation would, therefore, be very short; and it would be through a sea unknown, leading no one knew where; added to which, it was in a direction opposed to his Instructions. Would Sir John Franklin wait and run the risk of losing a season? We will now turn to Barrow's Strait; it becomes open much earlier, offers a wider sea for navigation, was known, was in the direction in which he was ordered, and was terminated with every fair prospect of successful accomplishment. It is, then, easy to imagine which he would adopt; we think the Cape Walker route. It is true this route was plain, simple, and limited; it did not present the attractive vision of a Polynia, "a wide, unmeasurable ocean," unlimited, but it was to appearance more practicable. But assuming that Franklin did attempt a northern route, by the Wellington Channel, and that under favourable circumstances he reached the open water, considering the probable late period of the season when he was enabled to accomplish this, and the short time for navigation, it seems improbable that he could have obtained any great distance to the north-west, especially in a sea encumbered by islands, presenting intricate passages between, and impetuous currents, obstacles opposed to quick progress. We think, then, considering all these conditions, had Franklin passed up the Wellington Channel, some traces of his outward course would have been found by Mr. Penny and his diligent searchers. The absence of these goes to prove he did not, and this is farther confirmed by the report of the whalers, that the year 1846 was very severe, but the whole is confirmed by the absence of despatches at Beechey Island. Franklin would never have departed from the unknown without leaving notices of his intentions, and he could not have selected a more eligible spot for such purpose than Beechey Island.

